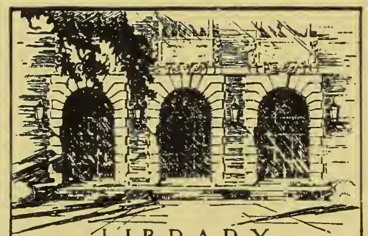
CENTENNIAL HISTORY *of* DECATUR AND MACON COUNTY

1829-1929



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CENTENNIAL HISTORY *of* DECATUR

AND

MACON COUNTY

Compiled and Rewritten by

MABEL E. RICHMOND

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FOREWORD

Writing of this history began years ago when reporters of The Review wrote down the words of men and women whose lives went back to the beginning of the county. Thus we have the history of Decatur as seen and made by people who were here when the century was new.

Among those whose eyes saw and whose ears heard happenings herein described as they saw and heard were Jerome R. Gorin, Willis Johnson, Sr., Richard J. Oglesby, Jane M. Johns, and scores of others.

The first two told this writer themselves of meetings they attended in the log court house when it was on Lincoln Square. They looked back to the early thirties of the nineteenth century and described the little village of a score of log cabins as they lived and worked and played in it when both were in their early teens. It is from such original sources that much of this history comes.

Among some of the Review writers who did most toward transcribing the history as given by word of mouth by men here at or near the beginning were Jerry Donahue and E. T. Coleman. Assembling it as a connected history began in 1923 when E. B. Hitchcock, then a member of The Review staff, started in the paper a series of articles under the heading, "The Story of Decatur." With imagination and taste he gave new color and picturesqueness to the beginnings of Macon county history.

Then E. T. Coleman took up the series and wrote for several months. He delved into Macon county records. He traveled over the county. He recreated as nearly as might be now the scenes in which Macon county people lived in early days. With fine judgment and rare style he improved and filled in with vividly worded chapters the work of other writers. He also found much not before recorded in the two worth while histories published in book form before that time. First of those two histories was John W. Smith's. It has always been the source of much pertaining to the early history of the county. To it the authors of this history owe much.

When Mr. Coleman's work was abruptly ended by his death in 1929, others kept up the series in The Review. Eventually, Mabel E. Richmond took hold.

As the series in the paper neared ending, suggestion was made that the history of the city and county set out therein was too valuable to leave buried in the files of a daily newspaper. There was often expressed the desire that the history should be preserved and made readily accessible in book form.

At that time Macon county was celebrating its hundredth anniversary. The Centennial Association, including some hundreds of citizens, fittingly marked the event by a pageant that was an artistic and, more unusual, a financial success.

Something more permanent than a pageant was desired to mark the anniversary. It was decided that publication of this history would be fitting.

The Centennial Association's history committee included Frank E. Sawyer, William Harris and Mrs. Cora B. Ryman. They joined with The Review in planning for a revision of the history for permanent publication as the Centennial Association's memorial. It was soon decided that rewriting the entire history was the only way to prepare it for book form.

Mabel E. Richmond, a member of The Review staff, has performed that work, giving her time wholly and exclusively to the task for almost a year.

Taking the articles in "The Story of Decatur" series, going through all previously published local histories, digging into files and documents, interviewing and writing to scores who might have facts of value or interest, searching for pictures, she has compiled, rewritten, and not least important, condensed, until there is here complete in outstanding events a history that The Review believes is not only a fitting and worthy memorial, but a history in which it can rightly take pride as showing vividly, accurately, and instructively the first hundred years of the city and county.

The most appalling thing to anyone who undertakes compiling a history of this kind is the many discrepancies in names of people, dates and facts in previously printed stories or histories. Direct contradictions are found in important stories. Wherever possible original records have been consulted.

Not the least difficult feature of revising the history has been that of selecting, condensing, and omitting. A great wealth of anecdote, detail, and incident, much of it important and worth while, had to be left out. Included in this were the township and other special histories written by different ones. These have been published in The

Review. Assurance was given that they would appear in the book. That has been found impossible. Space limits first set have been twice enlarged to get in chapters bearing on events essential to the history.

Pictures are an important feature of this history. Many here have not been previously published. No county history has as many illustrations of such interest and value.

In securing pictures, as well as in collecting other details, Mr. Sawyer, chairman of the Association's history committee, has been indefatigable. With an unusual knowledge of persons and sources of local historical interest, he has given time and work without stint. His suggestions have been important and valuable.

A part of the Centennial Association's cooperation has been arranging to place a copy of the history in each school and library in the county, and in state and other public libraries.

It is the hope of the executive committee, of which Judge James S. Baldwin is chairman, and who has contributed valuable support to the history, that the work may be used as a text in our schools. With this use in mind, some details have been included that might otherwise have been left out. H. C. S.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

For material in this history the writer is indebted to:

History of Macon county, Illinois, by John W. Smith.

History of Macon county, Illinois, by Brink, McDonough & Co.

Portrait and Biographical Record of Macon county, published by Lake City Publishing Co.

Past and Present of the City of Decatur and Macon county, Illinois, published by S. J. Clarke Publishing Co.

City of Decatur and Macon county, Illinois, edited by W. E. Nelson, published by Pioneer Publishing Co.

"Personal Recollections," by Jane M. Johns.

"Story of Decatur," by E. B. Hitchcock and E. T. Coleman, published in The Review.

"History of Macon County," by E. T. Coleman, published in The Review.

"The Speer Family," by Dr. J. G. Speer.

Manuscript on the Powers family by Mrs. Sarah Powers Durfee.

Old files of the Daily Review and Daily Republican, and previous newspapers.

Miscellaneous booklets on Decatur.

Adjutant-General's Reports.

Centennial History of Illinois.

Illinois Blue Book.

Township histories by the following: Friend's Creek, Dr. J. H. Dickey; Illini, Joy Batchelder; Harristown, Mrs. Lela Rotz; Whitmore, Louise Gantz Likins; Maroa, T. C. Grady; Niantic, M. E. Lockhart; Long Creek, Mrs. L. N. Lindsay.

History of Colored People by Marie Gray Baker.

A number of individuals have given valued assistance, particularly Thomas B. Shoaff of Shelbyville, who furnished material on Abraham Lincoln; and Edwin R. Davis, Decatur, Ill., R. R. Various persons have loaned photographs. Access to the J. E. Bering collection of photos, now in possession of his daughter, Mrs. Frank L. Evans, has been of much value.

Most of the pictures used in the book are from The Review's photograph files, and engravings were made by The Review engraving plant.

CHAPTER I

THE LAND OF PROMISE

"IT'S a beautiful land and most suitable for settlement." It was Louis Joliet who was speaking, as his birch canoe was paddled up a winding stream in the "Illinois country," and his keen eyes flashed with pleasure at the vista before him, one hot day in July, in the year 1673. His companion, Father Jacques Marquette, agreed.

LOUIS JOLIET

These two Frenchmen—explorer and missionary—were the first white men known to have traversed the valley of the Illinois river and the land watered by the Sangamon. They were charmed as they noted the summer beauty of the prairie, gorgeous with flowers; the woodlands with their inviting shade; the quiet but picturesque brooks and creeks.

Through all the years that have passed since they made their report back to their native France, voicing their admiration of the rich country they had seen, men and women have loved this same fair land. It is the tale of their coming to this valley, the hardships they endured to subdue the land and make homes for their families, their longings and aspirations, their joys, their sorrows, their work, their play, that makes the real story of Illinois, and of Macon county. Yet civil history, of necessity, must also be told to complete the account.

SANGAMON RIVER SCENE

Louis Joliet and Father Marquette had been sent from Canada to explore the mighty western river which the Indians called the Mississippi. They had come up the Illinois river, and, lured on by the charm of the scenery unfolding before them, had turned off the main river and followed the Sangamon for a distance.

Later explorers in Illinois such as Robert de LaSalle and Father Louis Hennepin, were just as enthusiastic as these first two. Father Hennepin called the Illinois country the "Delight of America."

ILLINOIS BEFORE 1818

Illinois was a part of the vast territory in this country first claimed by the Spanish, and which they called Florida. Afterwards it was explored and settled by the French, and then later was taken by the British. At last it was conquered for Virginia by the successful expedition of the courageous soldier, George Rogers Clark, when he captured Kaskaskia and Vincennes, and became a part of the County of Illinois created by the legislature of Virginia[1].

The County of Illinois included territory now known as the states of Illinois, Ohio, Indiana, Wisconsin and Michigan.

In 1784 the County of Illinois was ceded by Virginia to the United States. In 1787 Congress passed an ordinance for the government of the territory, which was then called the Northwest Territory.

In 1800 the Territory of Indiana was organized, including what is now the state of Illinois, and in 1809 the Territory of Illinois came into being. What is now Wisconsin was a part of that territory.

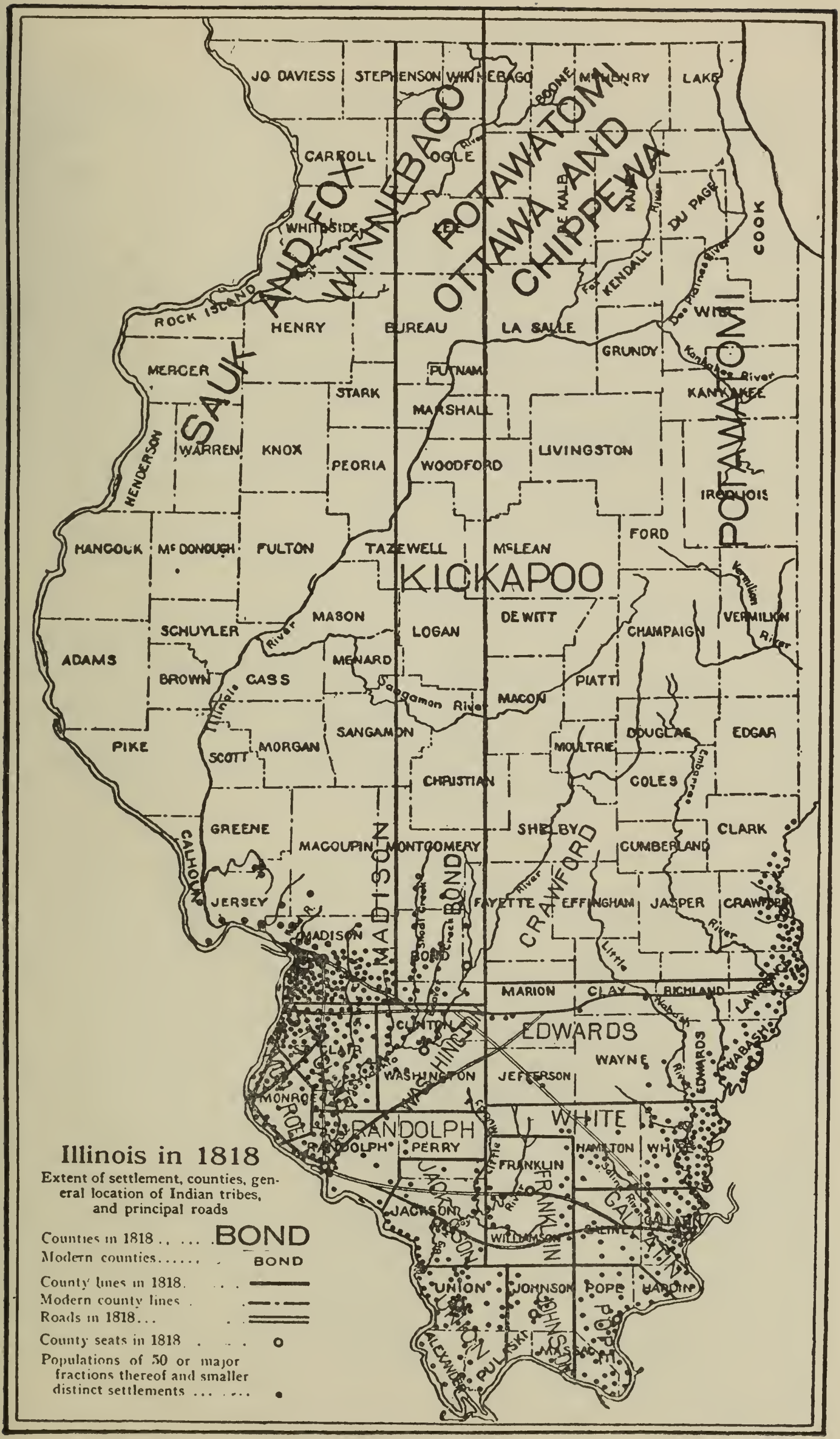
Ninian Edwards was appointed territorial governor, and the first territorial legislature convened at Kaskaskia in 1812.

In 1818 the present boundary was fixed and Illinois became a state.

MAKING MACON COUNTY

In the course of the various changes that have been made in boundaries of counties the territory that is now Macon county has been a part of the following counties: Knox, St. Clair, Madison, Edwards, Crawford, Clark, Fayette and Shelby.

At the time that Illinois was admitted to the union as a state, it had a population of about 35,000, the sections settled being on opposite sides of the state, on the Mississippi on the west and the Ohio and Wabash rivers on the east and south, thus providing connection by water with the outside world. The river bottom of the Mississippi and



Illinois in 1818

Extent of settlement, counties, general location of Indian tribes, and principal roads

Counties in 1818 . . . . . BOND
Modern counties . . . . . . BOND
County lines in 1818 . . . .
Modern county lines . . . .
Roads in 1818 . . . . .
County seats in 1818 . . . . o
Populations of 50 or major fractions thereof and smaller distinct settlements . . . . . . ●

the neighborhood of the U. S. saline in Gallatin county were the most thickly populated places.

THE INDIANS

The interior of the state was uninhabited, except by Indians. The Kickapoos were still in central Illinois and the Sacs and the Foxes in the territory northwest of the Illinois river[2].

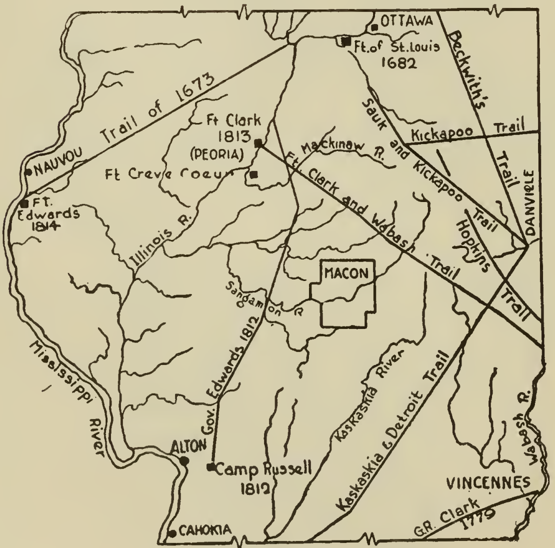
Black Hawk, the great Sac chief, was the last of the Indian leaders to question the domination of the white race in Illinois[3]. After his final defeat in 1832, and his removal to Iowa, the north part of the state was ready for settlement by the white race[4]. The last remaining Indians in central Illinois, the Kickapoos, by this time had removed to Kansas, and eventually went to Texas.

NOT ON IMPORTANT TRAILS

Macon county probably never was the site of an Indian village, nor was it crossed by important Indian trails, yet the Indian wandered over its hills and prairies to hunt game, and up and down the banks of the Sangamon to fish in its waters. Often spots in this county were chosen for camp grounds, at least one attraction, no doubt, being the fine springs of water.

One of the Indian camping grounds in the county was on the Hockaday farm southwest of Emery. Many arrow heads were found there in later years.

According to traditions and judging from evidences found, there were also Indian camp grounds at Sulphur Springs near Mt. Zion, at Boiling Springs in Hickory Point township, and at Dantown in Friend's Creek township.



ILLINOIS INDIAN TRAILS

An Indian trail once crossed the Sangamon in Friend's Creek township. It finally became a public road, but in later years disappeared. Traces of an Indian trail were found on the Samuel Powers farm northeast of Decatur.

Even after the white man settled in the county, bands of Indians were frequently seen, but usually they caused no trouble. It is related, however, that in the fall of 1828 a band of Kickapoos, which had camped on Long Creek to hunt, trap and fish, began making depredations on hogs and poultry in settlements in the vicinity.

One band was known to have made threats against the Ward families living south of the river. John and William Ward, heading a group of men from the neighborhood, among them James Edwards and Joshua Perdue, went after the red men one day, and overtook them on the prairie a short distance east of Mt. Zion. There were about twelve Indians and their squaws in the party.

Smith Mounce of the Ward party took a gun from one of the Indians, but John Ward told him to return it. Then Ward gave the Indians orders to move on, and they moved.

That was the last time Indians were seen in any numbers around Decatur. Sometimes an occasional stray one would be seen, and some of the older residents say that one Indian lived for the rest of his life out in the neighborhood of the Stevens settlement[5].

PRAIRIES BEAUTIFUL

Picture, if you can, Macon county as it was a hundred years ago.

Writers of that day have left their descriptions of the marvelous beauty of the prairies with us, and to these we must turn for a glimpse of the scene.

The century-ago traveler saw vast stretches of prairie grass, ablaze with blossoms of wild flowers of every hue. Moses writes:

"The prairies were marvels of beauty. The marvelous carpet of verdure and flowers in rich profusion and infinite diversity made of the prairies a garden of the Magi."

With the advance of the seasons the scene changed. After the blue of the violet and the bluebell in the spring came the more vivid blossoms of the summer time, and then came the brilliant fall flowers.

One writer tells that along the edges of sloughs were a species of red phlox which were dazzling. The wild roses, the black-eyed Susans, the golden-rod, the milkweed, the sunflowers, the asters, the ironweed, and the multitude of other blossoms came and went, making a panorama at all times of flowers which never failed to impress the beholder. A traveler then could be excused for thinking he was in the Garden of Eden[6].

And the prairie grass! Growing sometimes so tall that the little children easily got lost in it!

It was the terrible prairie fires which kept the prairies from becoming forests, and the tall grass was the fuel for these fires. Reynolds says:

"The fires were grand and terrible as they advanced with a mighty roar, destroying everything above ground."

Yet it was not the beauty of the prairies that attracted the early pioneers who came and settled in Macon county. They came because they had heard of the agricultural wealth of the land. They were men who wanted room, and naturally they came to a new country for it. They were not satisfied with small parcels of ground.

The "rich country of the Sangamon," of which Macon county was a part, was becoming known. Reports of the fertility of the soil were spread.

It was not to be child's play to blaze the way in a new land. This was not the place for the idler and the coward, but for the staunch and the brave, for the man accustomed to hardships.

Here were acres upon acres of fertile soil, untouched by the plow, but full of promise for the future. So the pioneers came.

---

[1] Three kinds of titles had to be dealt with in the state of Illinois, the old French claims, military rights under the Virginia rule, and head rights under the Act of 1783. The oldest titles in Macon county were from land grants under the Act of Congress.

[2] In Reynolds History is told the story of a white woman, Mrs. James Gilham, Sr., and her children who were stolen from their home in Kentucky and taken to the Kickapoo village in Sangamon county, crossing the future site of Decatur in the journey. It was in the year 1790. The Kickapoo town was located on Salt Creek, northeast of Elkhart Grove.

[3] J. Anderson Draper said that when he was a small child in Whitmore township he saw Black Hawk pass through that section, with several other Indians, on their way to northwest Illinois. This was only a few months before the Black Hawk war.

[4] Following his defeat, Black Hawk was taken on a trip through the east, the object being to show him the power of the white man. On his return to Iowa after that trip he said:

"Rock River was a beautiful country. I loved my towns, my corn fields and the homes of my people. I fought for it. It is now yours. Keep it as we did."

[5] Ben Frazee used to say that when he was a child, there was still fear of the Indians in the county. If the dog began to bark at night Mother Frazee became so frightened that she and the kiddies hid underneath the puncheons of the floor. Once they did see Indians on Stevens creek. The Indians were then leaving the county.

[6] Mrs. Jane M. Johns says in her "Personal Recollections" that shortly after her arrival in Decatur she met a peddler at the Macon house who said that he wanted to bring his old New England father to this country just once, so that he would not be so much taken with surprise when he went to heaven.

CHAPTER II

PIONEER SETTLERS

OF what benefit was the rich, fertile soil if one could not get the crops it would produce to a market? There were no railroads; the Sangamon was not a navigable stream.

This lack of transportation facilities was the greatest handicap to the early settlers of Macon county. Had this region not been so remote and inaccessible, it doubtless would have been populated much earlier.

Soon after Illinois was admitted to the Union, the general assembly began establishing roads. The earliest to cross Macon county was the Springfield-Paris road[1]. It was several miles south of the future site of Decatur. In 1831 this road was changed, being routed through Decatur[2]. In 1833 the Decatur-Springfield road, which corresponds largely to West Main street and Route 10 of today, was laid out.

Sometimes the settlers established a road themselves, without survey. The very first road to Shelbyville was made in that way[3]. It intersected the Springfield-Paris road at Mt. Gilead.

While the number of roads soon increased, little work was done on them, and often they were impassable in wet weather. Streams had to be forded, as there were no bridges.

Often roads were changed to avoid swamps and quagmires. This accounts for their crookedness.

The roads were of great benefit to the settlers, but still they pinned their hopes on making the Sangamon river a navigable stream, and it was the subject of much discussion. It will be remembered that some of the earliest speeches made by Abraham Lincoln dealt with the navigability of the Sangamon.

FIRST HOUSE

The first house built by white men within the present limits of Macon county was erected about 1816 by the Lorton brothers of St. Joe, Mich. They were Indian traders and built the house as a trading post. It stood in Section 18, Township 17 north, Range 4 East. This is about eleven miles northeast of Decatur, in Whitmore township. The cabin was not very far from the junction of Friend's Creek and the Sangamon river[4].

The cabin was stoutly built of logs, and it stood for many years. In 1834 it came into use as a polling place for Draper's district, and was used as such for many years.

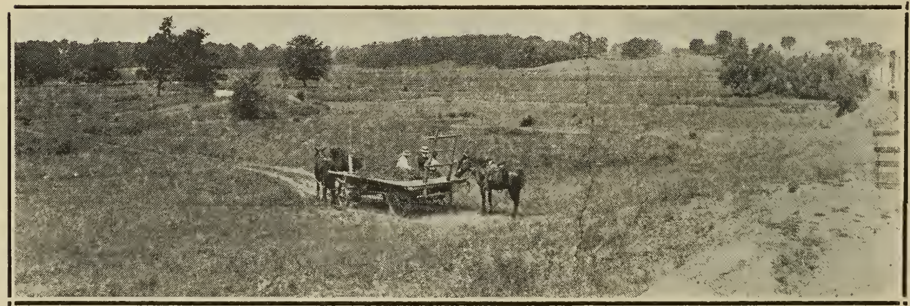
For about ten years the Lortons did a thriving business there, trading with the Indians, and getting furs in exchange for blankets, ammunition, calico, rum, and other articles which the Indians wanted. Often the ceiling of the log cabin was covered with pelts of mink, raccoon, possum, wolf and other animals. When the Indians left Macon county, there was no more business for the Lortons and they returned to Michigan.

The first permanent home in the county was built in 1820 by William Downing, who came from Vandalia. His cabin stood on the south side of the Sangamon river, near the present location of the Mueller Lodge. Little is known about him except that he was a bee hunter and trapper. He stayed in this neighborhood only a few years and then sold his cabin to John Ward and left, going to Bond county. His departure, it was said, was caused by his family's fear of Indians.

The Ward home there was the nucleus of the Ward settlement.

FIRST SETTLER

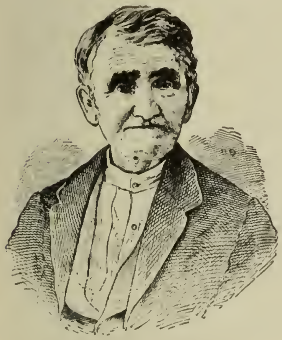
Leonard Stevens is called the first real settler of Macon county, for he came to stay, bringing part of his family with him. He had come to Illinois about 1818 from New York, settling first in Randolph county. The exact date of his arrival in Macon county is not known, but it is thought to have been either in 1821 or 1822. The Stevens family settled three miles northwest of Decatur on the stream which was named for them, Stevens Creek[5]. The Stevens home was the voting place for District No. 2 of Shelby county before Macon county was laid out.



WHERE LEONARD STEVENS BUILT

The site was a hill (since cut down) near Stevens Creek on the West Grand avenue road. The picture is of today.

One of the sons of Leonard Stevens who came to Macon county with him was Buel Stevens. Buel Stevens' eldest son, called Leonard Stevens, Jr., was the first white child born in the county, according to Smith's History[6].



JOSEPH STEVENS

Another son of Leonard Stevens, Sr., was Joseph Stevens, who lived in the county until his death. He was the last surviving member of the family in the county. Joseph Stevens was county treasurer from 1835 to 1837.

Dorus, Luther and James Stevens were other sons who came with their father to Macon county.

After Leonard Stevens had settled on Stevens creek, other pioneers came and stopped in the same neighborhood, and the cluster of cabins became known as the Stevens settlement. One of the early arrivals there was John Hanks, known especially through his connection with the Lincolns.

The first comers to the new country settled in clusters for the sake of having neighbors and also as a more effective means of defense against Indians.

(Photo by J. E. Bering)

STEVENS CREEK SCENE

Such a view as Stevens had from his home.

THE WARDS

South of the Sangamon another settlement sprang up, with the coming of the Ward family, and it was known as the Ward settlement. The Wards, including Mrs. John Ward, Sr., a widow, and her children, had come to Illinois in 1819 from Logan county, Ky., settling first near Vandalia. In 1824 they moved to Macon county. Among the families that became part of the Ward settlement were the Smiths, Warnicks and Austins.

Relations between the Stevens and the Ward settlements were not always friendly. They were of different stock. Accessions to the Ward colony were mostly from the southern states, and to the Stevens group from northern states. In a way the two settlements were rivals. Often blows were resorted to in settling disputes. But both settlements grew.

John W. Smith, who wrote and published the first history of Macon county, in 1876, descended from a family of the Ward settlement.

It was Lewis B. Ward who entered from the government the first piece of land in Macon county. It was the west half of the northeast quarter of section 31 in Township 16 North, Range 2 East, of the 3rd Principal Meridian, and it was entered Nov. 9, 1827. This land, which lies about eight miles southwest of Decatur, was owned by Mr. Ward until 1876, when he sold it to Bartley G. Henry.

Altogether about 800 acres of land were entered from the government during the year 1827.

FIRST HOUSES

According to statement made by Lewis Ward, the first houses erected in the vicinity of Decatur were as follows:

First, William Downing's, south of the river.

Second, Leonard Stevens's, on Stevens creek.

Third, Abraham Sprague's, south of fair grounds (now Fairview park).

Fourth, Hubble Sprague's, inside of fair ground.

Fifth, William King's, south of fair ground.

Mr. Ward said the first mill in the county was on Stevens creek and was built by William King, in 1826. It afterwards became Renshaw's mill.

The first house in the limits of the original Decatur, according to Mr. Ward, was built by Reuben Miller, who sold it to James Renshaw. It was the house in which the first store was kept.

WILLIAM WARD'S GUN

While chasing the foxy Indians out of Macon county William Ward used a rifle which had been brought from North Carolina by his father, John Ward, Sr., when he emigrated to Tennessee and later to Kentucky. John Ward, Sr., died in Kentucky, and the family brought the gun with them when they came to Illinois in 1819. Members of the Ward family used this gun in skirmishes with Indians in three states, Kentucky, Tennessee and Illinois, and it was also their trusty aid in bringing down game for their food in the pioneer days.

WILLIAM WARD'S GUN

The family called the gun "The Long Bill," because of its long barrel. The weapon is now in possession of F. N. Ward, great grandson of John Ward, Sr. He is holding the gun in the accompanying picture.

EARLY ARRIVALS

One of the busiest of the first settlers was Benjamin R. Austin, born in Virginia in 1802, who came to Macon county in 1825. He was a surveyor and laid out the original town plat of Decatur. He was the first county treasurer, served as justice of the peace, and otherwise was active in the early years of the county. His brother, William A. Austin, helped him lay out Decatur. William Austin was a justice of the peace for many years.

Captain David L. Allen, born in Loudoun county, Va., in 1806, came to Macon county in 1828, and was a leading figure for many years.

Philip D. Williams came in 1825 from Virginia. He served on the county board of commissioners, was a justice of the peace and held other offices. He built the second house in Decatur. It was at the corner of East Main and Water streets. Mr. Williams kept a place "for the entertainment of beasts".

Thomas Cowan came with the Leonard Stevens family in 1821 or 1822. In 1822 also came George W. Friend of Ohio, who settled in Friend's Creek township.

Besides the Wards, several other settlers came in the year 1824. Abraham and Hubble Sprague came from New York. Charles Nelson and Nathan Burrill, Kentuckians, arrived that year and located in Friend's Creek township[7].

Among the arrivals in 1825 were John Draper, who came from Virginia; James Howell, native of Ohio, who settled in Oakley, and was followed a little later by his son, William Howell; David Florey, native of Virginia; William W. McDaniel; William Warnick, first sheriff, who came from Tennessee; and Joseph Strickland, who settled in Niantic township. The Widick brothers, John, Samuel, Jacob, George and Joseph, from Virginia, came either in 1825 or 1826.

The year 1826 saw the arrival of a number of newcomers. Edmund McDaniel came from Vandalia that year; John McMennamy came from Tennessee; Emanuel Widick came from Tennessee; William King arrived that year; Elisha Freeman and Hiram Robinson came and settled in South Wheatland township.

Quite a few additions were made the following year, in 1827. Among them were James Edwards, born near Raleigh, N. C., who was a member of the party that drove the Indians out of the county; Jones Edwards, native of North Carolina, but who came here from Tennessee; Eldridge H. McDaniel; Thomas Nelms, who came from Logan county, Ky., and was killed by a falling tree, after coming here; Dempsey Pope of North Carolina, who came from Tennessee; Benjamin Wilson of Tennessee, who assisted in the organization of the county; James Finley, a Kentuckian; Michael Myers came either in 1827 or 1828.

In 1828 the population was increased by the addition of William A. Austin of Virginia; William Hanks of Kentucky, who settled in Harristown township; Samuel Braden, native of Ireland, who came to Macon county from Tennessee; William D. Baker, who settled in Long Creek township; David Davis, born in North Carolina, but who came here from Tennessee and settled in Long Creek; Robert Smith, Sr., native of North Carolina, who came from Sangamon county; William C. Smith from Sangamon county; Andrew Smith, his brother, also from Sangamon county; William Wheeler, Sr., native of Virginia; James Myers, Kentuckian, who settled in Long Creek township; William Dickey, who settled in Friend's Creek township; Valentine Claywell, native of Kentucky, who came to Pleasant View township; Ephraim Cox came either in 1828 or 1829.

A large number of homeseekers came during the year 1829, among them being: Alfred Laymons, native of Kentucky; Rev. Alonzo Lapham, born in New Hampshire, but a resident of Edgar county before coming here; Christopher Miller of Kentucky; James Miller of Kentucky; David Miller; James Myers, Kentuckian, who settled in Long Creek township; Edmund Turpin of Kentucky; Isaac C. Pugh of Shelby county; James Sanders, who came from Tennessee; Henry Traughber; Allen, Thomas and Finis Travis, who came from Wayne county; Josiah Abrams, native of Ohio, who came from Sangamon county; Alexander W. Bell, native of Tennessee, who located in Mt. Zion township; James D. Campbell; Andrew and John Davidson; John Y. Braden; David, Alexander C. and John Dickey, of Kentucky; John Scott, Sr., and son, Francis D., Parmenius Smallwood, and John Smith of Tennessee.

It will be seen that many families were established in the county by the end of 1829. Most of them were from Kentucky and Tennessee. Somebody must have been doing some publicity work for Macon county in those states! Before the end of 1829, said one writer, Decatur had seven cabins, two stores and a court house. Most of the settlers, however, lived outside of the tract laid off for the town.

The next few years brought many more homeseekers, too numerous to mention here. More land was taken up. More homes were built.

The history of Macon county had begun.

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[1] When the act concerning this road was approved Dec. 29, 1824, by the legislature, Thomas Constant, William Lowry and Amos Williams were named to "view, survey and locate it". They were to take into consideration the "local situation of the country, points of timber, public convenience, placing it on the most advantageous ground for a permanent road." It seems as if the first two men named failed to show up for the work, and the task fell on Amos Williams. His report to the general assembly was approved in April, 1826. The route of this road was practically the same as the present day state road through Mt. Zion, Lovington and Arcola.

[2] The act to change that road was approved by the general assembly Jan. 27, 1831. The act as approved read:

"That Jesse A. Pickrell and John Churchill of Sangamon county and Buel Stephens and David Owens of Macon county be and are hereby appointed commissioners to view, mark, survey and locate a road from the east fork of Clear creek, where the present road now crosses said creek, by the way of Sowell Cox's and George Churchill's, from thence to the long point, and from thence on the nearest and best ground to Decatur; and from thence across the north fork of the Sangamon river, at the most suitable place for a bridge or ferry, and from thence in the most direct course toward Paris, until said road strikes the present location. All that part of said road between the termination and place of beginning is hereby vacated." The "long point" mentioned in the act is south of Niantic.

[3] On Jan. 20, 1829, John Ward, Thomas Robinson and William A. Hodge were appointed by the General Assembly to "mark, view and lay out a road from Shelbyville through Ward's settlement, thence through Tazewell county to the mouth of the Big Vermilion on the Illinois river". The Macon county commissioners paid Mr. Ward $7.50 for his part of this work.

[4] When John Draper moved from Hickory Point to Whitmore township in 1828, he occupied the Lorton trading house for a time. Oliver Stuart said that when he cast his first presidential vote in 1856 he voted in the old Lorton cabin, in Draper's district.

[5] Among the newcomers to Illinois in the year 1822 were Abraham Henline, wife and four sons, who settled at Fancy Prairie, near Springfield.

In the spring of 1824 the family moved to what is now Piatt county. On their trip from Springfield to Monticello they saw only three houses. The first was at Mechanicsburg. The second was the Stevens home on Stevens creek, and the third was the trading house in Friend's creek township. On reaching what is now Monticello they saw the Hayworth home, which was the fourth house they had beheld since leaving Springfield.

[6] Descendants of Philip D. Williams say that his son, Philip A. Williams, was the first child born here. He was born Aug. 24, 1825. There is no record of the date of birth of the Stevens child, but the family lived in the county several years before the Williams family came.

[7] In the original Macon county there were also early settlements in the sections which later became parts of other counties.

The first settler in what afterwards became Piatt county was George Hayworth, a Quaker from Tennessee, who located in 1823 on land now in the city limits of Monticello. There he built his cabin. The same year came a Mr. Daggett, and other settlers arrived the following year. In 1828 James A. Piatt bought Hayworth's claim and moved to it the following year.

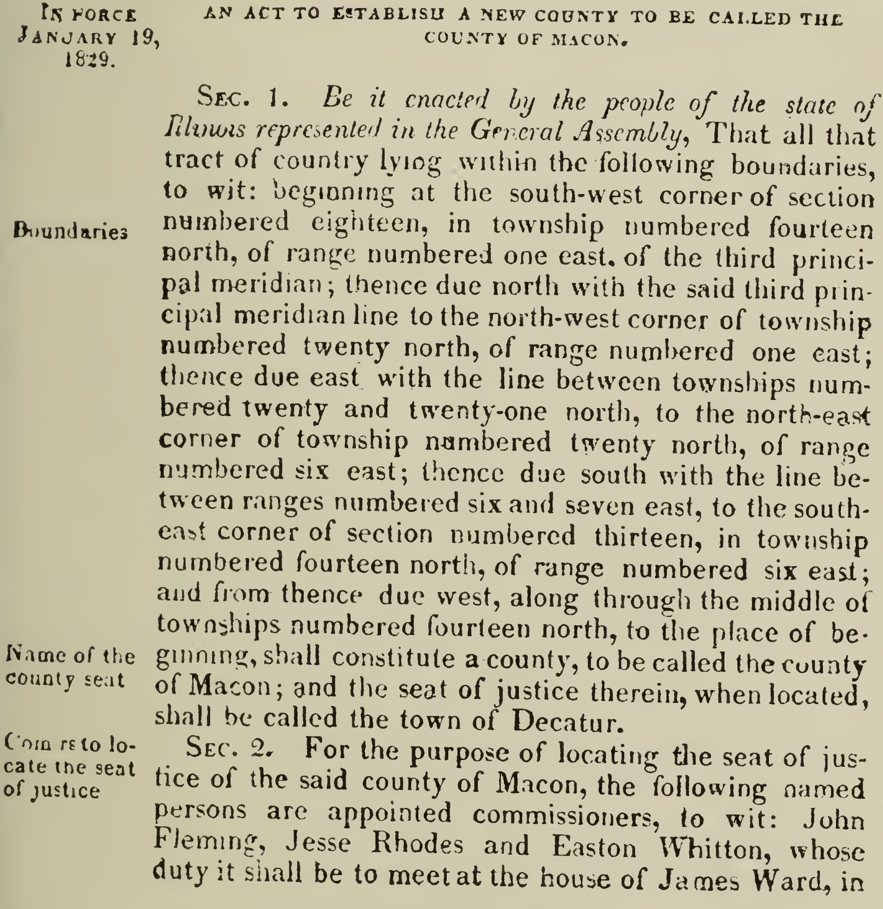
The first settlers in what is now Dewitt county were Zion Shugart, Edom Shugart, their mother, Mr. and Mrs. Elisha Butler and John Coppenbarger, who settled in Tunbridge township in October, 1824. That winter Nathan Vestal came and settled nearby. Others came the next year. One report of early history says a settler named J. Clion lived as early as 1820 one mile west of what is now the city of Clinton.

Moultrie county's earliest settler was John Whitley, native of Maryland, who came in 1826 and settled at the point of timber which afterwards was known as Whitley's Point. With him were his wife, six sons, John, Sharp, Mills, Randall, William and Josiah, his son-in-law, Samuel Linley, and two or three daughters. Whitley afterwards moved to Coles county, and his children scattered, some going to Texas and Missouri.

CHAPTER III

COUNTY AND TOWN LAID OUT

IT was a long, long way to Shelbyville in 1829. Swollen rivers must be forded and miles of prairie crossed. But Shelbyville was the county seat of Shelby county, to which the territory now known as Macon county was then attached, and every legal transaction meant a journey to the county seat.



In force January 19, 1829.

AN ACT TO ESTABLISH A NEW COUNTY TO BE CALLED THE COUNTY OF MACON.

Boundaries

SEC. 1. *Be it enacted by the people of the state of Illinois represented in the General Assembly,* That all that tract of country lying within the following boundaries, to wit: beginning at the south-west corner of section numbered eighteen, in township numbered fourteen north, of range numbered one east. of the third principal meridian; thence due north with the said third principal meridian line to the north-west corner of township numbered twenty north, of range numbered one east; thence due east with the line between townships numbered twenty and twenty-one north, to the north-east corner of township numbered twenty north, of range numbered six east; thence due south with the line between ranges numbered six and seven east, to the south-east corner of section numbered thirteen, in township numbered fourteen north, of range numbered six east; and from thence due west, along through the middle of townships numbered fourteen north, to the place of beginning, shall constitute a county, to be called the county of Macon; and the seat of justice therein, when located, shall be called the town of Decatur.

Name of the county seat

Com'rs to locate the seat of justice

SEC. 2. For the purpose of locating the seat of justice of the said county of Macon, the following named persons are appointed commissioners, to wit: John Fleming, Jesse Rhodes and Easton Whitton, whose duty it shall be to meet at the house of James Ward, in

ACT FORMING MACON COUNTY

The above is a reproduction from Page 28, section on "Counties", of The Revised Code of Laws of Illinois, published in 1829. The act was approved Jan. 19, 1829. The book from which this reproduction was made is the property of O. B. Gorin.

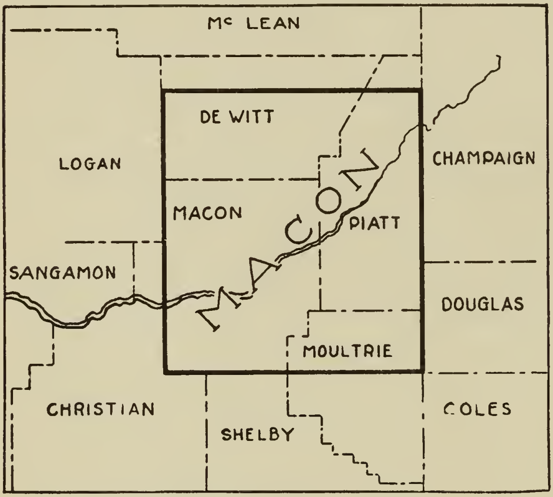
It is not strange that with the increase in the number of newcomers establishing homes here, the settlers began to talk over means of remedying the situation.

Why not form a new county? Why not have a county seat nearer their homes?

FORM NEW COUNTY

As a result, three men, Benjamin R. Austin, Andrew W. Smith and John Ward, all from the Ward settlement, were sent to the state capital, Vandalia, previous to the convening of the legislature in 1829, to ask passage of an act dividing Shelby county and forming a new county. They succeeded in their mission. The act establishing the county of Macon was approved Jan. 19, 1829.

The county as formed by this act was much larger than the county of today. It included territory which is now Dewitt county, except for its northern tier of townships, all of what is now Piatt county, except one township, and about half of Moultrie county.



PLAT OF MACON COUNTY

Dewitt county was formed on March 1, 1839. The following day an act was passed which added to the county of Macon the section now known as Niantic township. In January, 1841, Piatt county was formed from parts of Macon and Dewitt counties, and in February, 1843, Moultrie was formed from parts of Macon and Shelby.[1]

These changes gave us the present boundaries of Macon county.

The object in adding Niantic township was to prevent removal of the county seat from Decatur to a new town in Whitmore township, called Murfreesboro, which was nearer the center of the county as it was then. At that time the land in Niantic township was considered worthless, and it was annexed merely to add to the western territory of the county, which would bring Decatur near the center.

It was after the defeat of the project to make Murfreesboro the county seat that people of that locality, represented by James A. Piatt, went before the legislature to ask for the detachment of what is now Piatt county from Macon county. The new county then formed assumed the name of its champion[2].

Mr. Piatt for a number of years had been a member of the county commissioners' court of Macon county, and was a valued and efficient official.

Macon county as originally laid out was a rectangle, thirty-nine miles long and thirty-six miles wide, containing 1,404 square miles. The county as it is today contains 577 square miles, or 369,280 acres.

The new county was attached to the first judicial circuit.

LOCATE COUNTY SEAT

The act of the legislature creating Macon county also provided for the seat of justice therein. John Fleming, Jesse Rhodes and Easton Whitton[3] were named commissioners to locate the county seat. They met April 10, 1829, at the home of James Ward, and "carefully and impartially viewed and examined the situation and convenience, likewise the advantages of the present and future population."

The new town was located on the "fifteenth section in township sixteen north, in range 2 east, northeast quarter and east half of said quarter, the southeast corner of said above-named half quarter".[4]

The first election in the county took place at James Ward's blacksmith shop, the second Monday in April, 1829. William Warnick was elected sheriff. County commissioners were named as follows: Benjamin Wilson, Elisha Freeman and James G. Miller.

The first county commissioners' court was held at the home of James Ward, May 19, 1829. Daniel McCall was appointed county clerk and Benjamin R. Austin was named county treasurer. Austin's bond was $200, with John Miller and William King as sureties.

LEVY TAX

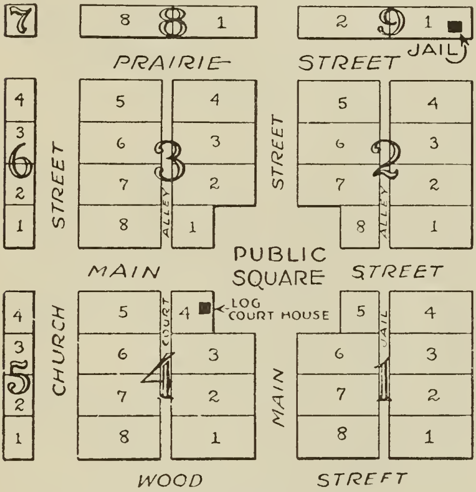
One of the first acts of the county court was to provide for funds to meet the expenses of the county, hence a tax was levied on the personal property of the residents.[5]

The following is the list of properties taxed: Slaves and indentured or registered negro or mulatto servants, pleasure carriages, distilleries, stock in trade, horses, mares, mules, asses and neat cattle over three years old, watches and all other personal property except lawful firearms.

TOWN LAID OUT

Now that the county had a court and a location for a county seat, steps were taken for laying out the town. On June 1, 1829, the county commissioners made order as follows:

"That Benjamin R. Austin, county surveyor for the county of Macon, be required to lay off the town of Decatur after the form of Shelbyville and make and return a complete plat of the same on or before the first day of July next."[6]



PLAT OF DECATUR

Under this order the original town of Decatur was platted. The boundaries were: Prairie street on the north, Water street on the east, Wood street on the south, and Church street on the west. In the center was laid out the square, now known as Lincoln square. The town was divided by a Main street east and west and a Main street north and south.

Austin's report was acknowledged by the county commissioners July 7, 1829.

Decatur was located at the edge of the timber, hence the name, Wood street. The northern boundary line, being out on the prairie, was called Prairie.

At the time the town was platted, the land on which it was located had not been entered from the government. It was afterwards entered by Parmenius Smallwood, Easton Whitton and Charles Prentice, and deed of gift was made by them to the county commissioners on Oct. 8, 1831. The deed was for twenty acres. The newly platted town, however, did not cover the entire twenty acres.

The bond which the three men above named gave June 20, 1829, for this deed for the land was one of the first legal documents recorded in the county.

SALE OF LOTS

A sale of town lots was ordered for July 10, 1829. The clerk was required to advertise the sale in the newspaper printed in Vandalia.

Credit of twelve months was given for payment on lots, note with approved security being required.

There was no wild rush for town lots on the day of the sale. The first lot disposed of was Lot 2, in block 3. This was the corner where the Lincoln cafe now stands. It was bid in for $53.50 by John Manley. The second lot sold also was a corner lot. It was lot 6, block 1, and was purchased for $12. That is the lot at the southeast corner of the square[7]. John McMennamy was auctioneer.

James (Uncle Jimmy) Renshaw was Decatur's first business man. He also had the distinction of putting up the first building. He evidently believed Decatur was going to become a good town, and he decided to open a tavern. On Oct. 26, 1829, he secured a license, for which he paid $4. Tavern rates were fixed by the court. Straight prices prevailed. There was no pick and choice of rooms for the traveler in this log cabin "hotel."

For breakfast and horse feed the cost was 37½ cents. For lodging man and horse over night (the man to have supper) the price was 62½ cents. Dinner and horse feed were 37½ cents. Brandy, rum, gin, wine or cordial could be sold at 25 cents a half pint, and whisky or cider brandy at 12½ cents a half pint.

A license was required of any one who wished to enter any kind of merchandise business, license fees ranging from $3 to $5. The court also established rates for ferries on the river. The first ferry license was issued to John Ward, Dec. 7, 1829, for $1.

ILLINOIS STATUTES THEN AND NOW

Comparison of the Illinois Statutes of 1829 and the same volume a hundred years later is an interesting study, both in contents and size of volume. Laws in force in 1829 made up a book little more than half an inch thick. A present day similar volume is five times as thick, with pages twice the size.

The general assembly then was concerned with laying out counties, roads, canals, building bridges, establishing courts and otherwise providing for legislation necessary in a new state.

Previous to every session of the assembly, it was the duty of the secretary of state to provide sufficient stationery. One of the appropriations made in 1831 for this kind of supplies was to John D. Gorin for $7.62½ for blank books and other stationery furnished. John D. Gorin was the grandfather of O. B., J. P., and Miss Mattie Gorin of Decatur. He was a receiver in the land office at Vandalia.

Mr. Gorin's name appears in another list of appropriations, when he was voted $35 for the use of his room for the committee on the revision of the statutes. That appropriation was made in January, 1829.

Two early volumes of the Illinois statutes, the ones published in 1829 and in 1831, are now cherished possessions of O. B. Gorin.

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[1] Dr. Joseph King afterwards prominent in Decatur, took an active part in the organization of Piatt county. He lived in what is now Monticello before coming to Decatur. He was the first county clerk of Piatt county, member of the first board of school commissioners, and was the first physician in Monticello.

[2] Mr. Piatt became famous for his skill and courage in capturing horse thieves. It was his horses which were stolen in the spring of 1832 by the two men, Redmon and Wyatt, who were horsewhipped by Sheriff Warnick. Mr. Piatt captured the men in Indiana near the Ohio line, and brought them to Decatur where they were tried and convicted, and sentenced to be whipped. One was to receive 39 lashes and the other 49. Both these horse thieves came to a tragic end. One became a murderer and was hanged. The other was drowned in the Mississippi.

[3] Easton Whitton of Hillsboro, was the only one of the three men named to locate the county seat of Macon county whose name appears in the history of the county afterward. All three were from other counties. Whitton was one of the three men who entered the land on which Decatur was laid out. He was elected to the legislature from Montgomery county, serving in 1836-38 and also in 1842-44.

[4] Pioneer citizens of Macon county were not at all agreed over the location of the county seat. There was much argument over the site. One meeting broke up in a free for all fist fight, in which one man was so badly beaten that he died afterwards as a result. Different votes were taken. One favored a site south of the river. That was rescinded, however.

[5] The tax, when collected for the year 1829, amounted to $109.32½. It is recorded that Benjamin R. Austin, surveyor, was paid $24 for laying out the county seat, and that Easton Whitton was allowed $10.50 and John Fleming and Jesse Rhodes $7.50 each, for locating the seat of justice. John McMennamy was allowed $1 for crying the sale of lots in Decatur.

[6] Shelbyville was laid out according to the plan of Vandalia. One of the three men who entered the tract of land for the town site of Shelbyville was James T. B. Stapp, who afterwards became one of Decatur's leading citizens.

[7] There seemed to be many changes in ownership of the original lots of the town in the first few years. Evidently the pioneers "swapped" lots to a considerable extent. Among the earliest owners of lots were James Renshaw, Lydia Packard, Landy Harrell, Thomas Cowan, Daniel McCall, John D. Wright, James Johnson, Samuel B. Dewees, and James Miller. As deeds could not be made out at the time, it is impossible to tell from the records which lots were sold on the first sale day.

CHAPTER IV

FIRST COURT HOUSE

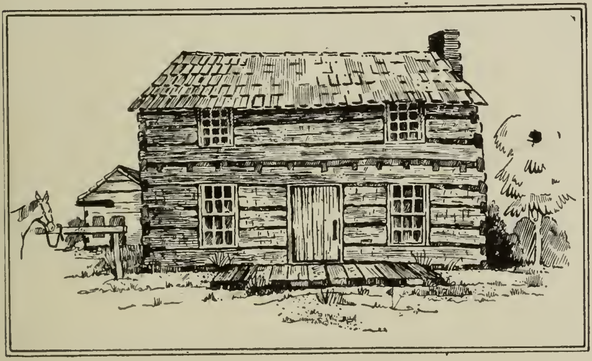
THE first need that arose after Macon county and its seat of justice, Decatur, had been laid out, was the need for a court house. The county had a perfectly good seat of justice, but no place for justice to sit.

In fact, the court had to go clear outside the county seat, to the home of James Ward, to sit.

No record has come down to us of the definite action taken to build a court house. No mention is made in court records of the letting of the contract, or the details of starting the work. We do know that the first court house was erected, or at least started, in the latter part of the year 1829 and that, like other buildings of the time, it was made of logs.

The first official mention we have of the court house is in an order of the commissioners court in June, 1830, allowing Thomas Taylor $26.18¾ for repairing the court house. On Dec. 6 John Hanks was allowed $9.87½ for chinking and daubing, and Luther Hunting $8 for the floor, which was laid by Isaac Miller. In September, 1831, Isaac C. Pugh was allowed $2.37½ for glass.

At the session of the commissioners court at the April term in 1832 James Johnson was allowed until the first day of November to finish the court house "agreeably to a former contract, except to build a chimney on the outside." The order goes on to say that he is to wait for his pay until there is money enough in the treasury, that is not otherwise appropriated, to pay him.


LOG COURT HOUSE, 1829

That old court house, built 100 years ago, is today one of our most cherished possessions. Standing on a grassy knoll in Fairview park, it reminds the visitor of the old cabin days, the days when history was being made in the county. It is the only building in Decatur today to link us with the very beginnings of the county.

The log court house originally stood on the west half of lot 4, block 4, of the newly platted town. That was the southwest corner of Lincoln square. It was 18 by 24 feet in size, was a story and a half high, one room below and one above. The building faced on West Main street. It had two doorways, one on the north and one on the south. An old fashioned fireplace furnished heat. The house had clapboard roof and puncheon floor.

Evidently there was some argument over the price to be paid Mr. Johnson, for it seemed necessary to appoint two men to determine the amount due him. Those two men were Thomas Cowan and Amos Robinson. Johnson was allowed $50.62 for lumber, $101.43 for work, $11.31¼ for nails, $4.50 for seasoning plank, 75 cents for error in lumber bill, $27.50 for material for chimney, and $3.25 for arch bars.

Others who worked on the court house before its completion were John Miller, who laid the hearth, for which he received $21; Joe Querrey and Amos Robinson, who received $5 each for work. Henry Wheeler furnished the window shutters for $6.75. Amos Robinson and Thomas Cowan were allowed $1.50 each for valuing the work done by Mr. Johnson. This brings the total cost of the court house up to $286.60.

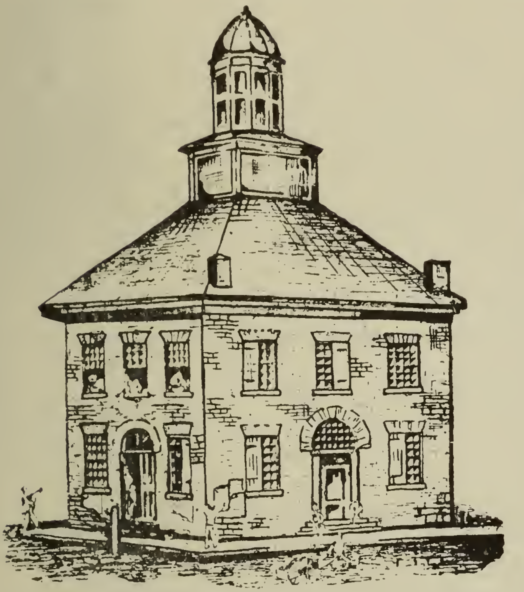
This court house was used by Macon county for nearly ten years. It was also used for all public gatherings, church services, school, and so on.

After the second court house had been built, the log cabin was sold to Robert Allen, who moved it to his farm east of town, where it was used first as a home and then as a barn for many years. The farm passed through several hands, finally coming to Mr. and Mrs. J. M. Clokey, who, on learning the history of the building, gave it to the Old Settlers' association which placed it in Riverside park, in 1893.

Some years later it was turned over to the city park department and was moved to Fairview park. First it stood on the south drive, but in 1907 it was moved to its present location at the top of the hill. Park Superintendent Frank D. Torrence made extensive repairs to it at that time.

SECOND COURT HOUSE

Decatur soon outgrew its log court house and in 1837 it was decided to erect a new building. On Jan. 16, that year, the county commissioners ordered Charles Emerson, Richard Oglesby and James Renshaw to contract for a new court house.



SECOND COURT HOUSE, 1838

In March they reported that they had contracted with Leonidas Munsell of Edgar county to build Decatur's second court house. The contract price was $10,625 and the building was to be completed within 18 months. One thousand dollars was to be paid the contractor in advance, and bonds of the county given for the balance, payable in twenty years, with 8 per cent interest.

Could it be that Macon county was jealous of McLean county in 1837? It appears very much like it. At least, when the contract for the new court house was made out, it specified that the new building was to "be equal to or superior to the McLean county court house." Mr. Munsell, who lived at Paris, doubtless had a reputation for building court houses, for he had erected such buildings at Shelbyville, Bloomington and Paris.

The second court house was 40 feet square, 32 feet high, built of brick, with dome cupola on top. The contract specified it was to have a bell weighing 120 pounds and a lightning rod. The court room was on the second floor. A hall divided the first floor, which had four rooms.

After some discussion as to the location, it finally was decided that the site of the first building was not suitable, and the court ordered Munsell to build the new court house on the southeast corner of the public square, and within ten feet of the streets running through the square. The order was signed by Abram Chapin, William Muirheid and James A. Piatt, court commissioners.

The new building was completed in 1838 and was accepted by the court June 20, 1838.

H. M. Gorin was named agent to rent the rooms of the old court house. Probably the renting project did not prove successful, for in December the court decided to dispose of the property. The lot was bought by Ninian W. Peddecord, and it was deeded to him March 9, 1839. As stated before Robert Allen purchased the log cabin.

The community was proud of its new court house. It had every right to be, for it was the most pretentious building in the city. This building was used until after the Civil war, when the county again had outgrown its official home.[1] Then rooms were secured in the new Powers building and occupied in 1870, and they served for county purposes until the present court house was erected in 1891-92, at a cost of $100,000. This building now is outgrown, and the matter of providing more space is a present day problem.

THE JAIL

After the county was provided with a court house, the next county building needed was a jail. The first jail was erected in the fall of 1832. It also was a log structure and was about twelve feet square. It stood on the northwest corner of Prairie and Water streets. The building contained two rooms.

The commissioners' court, composed that year of Philip D. Williams, Hugh Bowles and Elisha Freeman, gave the contract to build the jail to James Johnson, the man who had erected the log court house, and, as in the previous project, he was asked to wait for his pay until the county could pay without distressing itself.

The first jail was moved about 1836 to the northwest corner of Wood and Church streets, where it burned about four years later. The county was without a jail then until about 1843 when a brick building two stories high was erected on the site of the jail which had burned. It contained two cells. This jail was used until 1867 when a new jail was erected on the south side of Wood street, between Water and Franklin.[2] It had stone walls and contained twenty-four cells. This jail, enlarged and improved, is still in use. Adjoining it the sheriff's residence was erected.

WHIPPING POST

Decatur had another means of punishment in the early days, but it was used only once. That was the old whipping post which stood in the public square.[3] It was used in 1832 when the two horse thieves, William Redmon and Thomas Wyatt, received the punishment to which they had been sentenced, one to receive thirty-nine, the other forty-nine lashes. Sheriff William Warnick officiated at the whipping.

For performing this duty he was paid $7, and doubtless he felt he had earned it. All the town turned out to witness the punishment.

It nearly "broke" Macon county to take care of the two horse thieves in 1832. The two men, Thomas Wyatt and William Redmon, were probably the first prisoners in the new jail, and they were confined there for seventy-seven days.

P. D. Williams collected several bills. One was $57.50 for "dieting" the prisoners, another was $56 for personal service as guard, another for $7.75 for "service rendered" Thomas Taylor, guard, and $18.50 for "service rendered" James Querrey as guard. Evidently Mr. Williams boarded the guards.

Joseph Stevens also collected $8 for guarding the jail eight days and nights, and Robert Johnson was paid 60 cents for guarding one night. Sheriff Warnick received $19 for keeping the horses. There were other bills for "dieting" the prisoners, and altogether the bills made quite a large expense total.

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[1] The right of anyone to use the court house was not questioned. That privilege extended even to animals. It has been told that for years the cows would be allowed to wander through the lower hall on the first floor and occupy the rooms which were not then being used. The court house had four rooms on the first floor, and for a long time only two of them were being used.

[2] Judge W. G. Cloyd of Bement, tells the following story regarding the building of this jail: "The late I. D. Jennings was sheriff when the jail was supposed to be finished and turned over to the county authorities. Three prisoners, two white men and one colored brother, were locked in. For some reason dissatisfied with the accommodations afforded at the Hotel de Jennings, they removed a stone from between two others, and crawled out. The colored gentleman declined to leave, and the white fellows were soon returned. Then it was discovered that the men who superintended the construction had laid the building stones in mortar, but had not fastened the stones together with dowell pins, I believe they are called. The incident led to a newspaper controversy, in which the purchase of railroad land and other business matters figured.

"The news of the escape of the prisoners spread rapidly, and quite a crowd assembled. The late Sheridan Wait was there, and he quaintly remarked, 'Erected in 1867, I see.' Sheriff Jennings consoled the prisoners by telling them that it was their business to escape if they could, but his business was to watch them."

[3] The early criminal codes of Illinois were influenced by the impossibility of providing for punishment by imprisonment. Many counties had no jails, in spite of repeated statutes that required that county commissioners provide them. There was no state penitentiary. Hence, whipping was regarded as the most feasible method of punishment.

CHAPTER V

COURT NEWS

IT was a great day in Macon county when the first term of circuit court opened at the new log court house, on May 6, 1830.

So far the county had managed to struggle along without a court house, and probably could have done so longer, but what is a county without all its honors and privileges? Hereafter Macon county could assume all the dignity befitting its place in history.

The new court house wasn't finished yet, when that first term was held, but what did that matter? Real court life had begun.

Court days then were a sort of clearing house for the neighborhood. One had to attend court to be up to date and know what was going on. There were no newspapers then to spread the news, and each person must be on hand to get the latest information himself.

The people couldn't all get into the court house, but why worry about that? There was as much going on outside as inside. (Maybe more, sometimes.)

Judge Samuel D. Lockwood, one of the circuit court judges of the district, presided over that first term of court. William Warnick was the sheriff, Daniel McCall clerk, and John H. Pugh of Springfield was prosecuting attorney. Court opened at 11 o'clock.

The docket didn't promise much excitement. The county had not been able to round up any murder cases. Nobody had been taken up for burglary or larceny. No one had filed suit for divorce. There was not even a liquor violation case. The only thing that indicated anything interesting was two slander cases.

The four cases heard were:

Thomas Cowan versus William King, appeal.
John Hanks versus John Henderson, slander.
William Webb versus Hubble Sprague, slander.
William Webb versus Philip D. Williams, appeal.

Evidently William Webb realized the importance of having a worthy docket on that first day of court, so he provided two of the four cases.

The two appeal cases were dismissed at the cost of the defendants.

The first slander case was dismissed at the cost of the plaintiff

The second slander case was dismissed at the cost of the defendant.

So the docket was wiped clean.

But no doubt everybody had a good time.

The grand jury was sworn in and retired to "consider presentments." However, the jurors had nothing to consider and they returned and reported such to the court and were discharged. The private session of the grand jury was held, according to report, in the timber south of the town, which then ended at Wood street.

GRAND JURY

The grand jury on that occasion was composed of:

Benjamin R. Austin
Robert Foster
Lambert G. Bearden
Jeremiah Ward
Michael Myers
Edmund McDaniel
John Miller, sr.
Isaac Miller
Samuel Miller
Thomas Cowan
John Miller, 2d
Jonathan Miller
Francis G. Hill
William Freeman
James Ward
William D. Baker
William Wheeler
William Miller
James Hanks
David Miller, 2d
William King
Luther Stevens
John Hanks

The following men composed the petit jury:

David Miller
Matthias Anderson
James Owens
Dorus Stevens
Parmenius Smallwood
Winkfield Everett
William Ward
Samuel Widick
James A. Ward
John Mowry
James Finley
George Widick
Peter Walker
Berry Rose
David Davis
John Widick
James W. D. Taylor
James Myers
Henry Ewing
James McGinas
Landy Harrell
William Cox
Randolph Rose
John Warnick

These jurors had been named by the county commissioners court at the March term in 1830. Previous to that, the county commissioners had selected lists of grand jurors and petit jurors, at their August meeting in 1829, to serve at a fall term of circuit court to be held at the home of James Ward. However, there is no record of a term of circuit court held in the fall of 1829. The juries which had been selected for that term were almost the same as the lists given above.

ROAD DISTRICTS

Road districts were laid out May 19, 1829, by the county commissioners. William Hanks was named supervisor of District No. 1 north of the river. John McMennamy was named supervisor of District No. 2 south of the river.[1]

The county commissioners that same day took action to the effect that William Ward and Robert Smith be appointed viewers "of that portion of the Paris-Springfield road between the house of Widow Ward and the furrow leading in the direction from Paris to Springfield."

Old county records tell of the first local road project taken up after the county was organized.

Some of the inhabitants of Road District No. 1 had made petition for the location of a new road to begin at the east line of the county, "through near Sadorus grove," and extend west "to intersect the old trace at Long Point." P. D. Williams, John Miller, Sr., and Henry Florey were named commissioners to locate this road.

The report of the road viewers was approved Dec. 7, 1829.

The road viewers "found that the road applied for is a useful and necessary road, and the same can be made on good ground according to the best of our knowledge." The road was to extend from the east line "west through the prairie to the Sangamon, three miles above George Carter's, then west to Decatur, west through the south side of John Miller, Sr.'s farm, then west through the north side of William Miller's farm in the direction of Long Point." (Long Point was south of Niantic.)

ELECTION DISTRICTS

At the county commissioners court the first day of June, 1829, it was ordered that the county be laid out in two election districts for the election of magistrates and constables.

All territory north of the North Fork of the Sangamon was to be called Decatur district Phillip D. Williams, Henry Florey and Isaac Miller were appointed judges of election. They were required to hold an election at the house of Parmenius Smallwood on the 20th day of the month for three justices of the peace and two constables.

All territory south of the river composed the second district, to be known as Ward's district. Robert Foster, Michael Myers and James Ward were appointed judges. They were required to hold an election for two justices of the peace and two constables on the 20th of the month, at the house of James Ward.

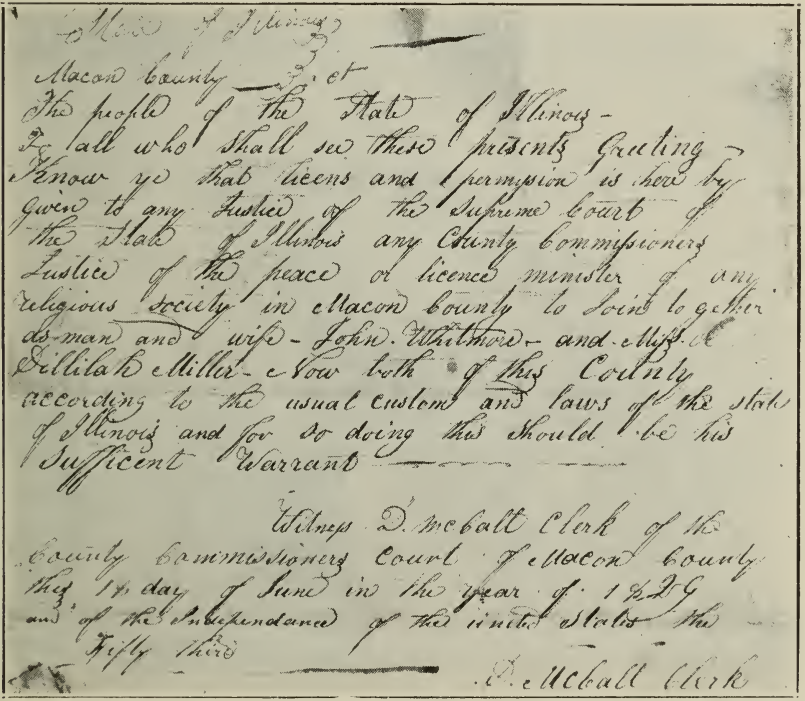
SOME FIRST RECORDS

The first deed recorded in Macon county was on Dec. 19, 1829. John Ward and wife, Jane, conveyed to Benjamin Wilson, for $250, a tract of land, the east half of northeast quarter, section 33, Township 16 north, range One east.

The first will on record was filed Aug. 1, 1830. It was the will of Christopher Whitman.

The first murder trial in the county was the case of Samuel Huffman for the murder of Wesley Bohrer, tried May 29, 1846. The jury found him guilty of man-slaughter and he was sentenced to the penitentiary for five years.

The first divorce case was that of William Stuart versus Susan Stuart, in which decree was awarded Oct. 3, 1837.



State of Illinois
Macon County — Sct
The people of the State of Illinois -
To all who shall see these presents Greeting
Know ye that licens and permission is here by
given to any Justice of the Supreme Court of
the State of Illinois any County Commissioners
Justice of the peace or licenced minister of any
religious society in Macon County to Join together
as man and wife - John. Whitmore - and Miss
Dillilah Miller - Now both of this County
according to the usual custom and laws of the state
of Illinois and for so doing this should be his
Sufficent Warrant

Witness D. McCall Clerk of the
County Commissioners Court of Macon County
this 14 day of June in the year of 1829
and of the Independance of the united States the
Fifty third
D. McCall Clerk

FIRST MARRIAGE LICENSE

The bridal couple were Delilah Miller and John Whitmore. The return is signed by John Miller, acting justice of the peace, who performed the ceremony on the 20th.

FIRST MARRIAGES

Below is a list of the marriage licenses issued the first two years after the county was organized:

Names	License issued	Time of marriage
John Whitmore to Delila Miller	June 18, 1829	June 20, 1829
George Coppenbarger to Nancy Henderson	Nov. 10, 1829	Nov. 12, 1829
Henry Traughber to Nancy Smith	Nov. 17, 1829	Nov. 17, 1829
Jacob Caulk to Mary Walker	Jan. 7, 1830	Jan. 7, 1830
Joseph Stevens to Mary D. Warnick	June 17, 1830	June 17, 1830
John Howell to Elizabeth Jones	July 14, 1830	July 14, 1830
Stewart Henderson to Nancy Vinson	July 20, 1830	July 22, 1830
William Ward to Elizabeth Wheeler	Dec. 7, 1830	Dec. 9, 1830
James Edwards to Nancy Hill	Dec. 16, 1830	Dec. 16, 1830
Lewis B. Ward to Elizabeth Walker	Dec. 23, 1830	Dec. 23, 1830

In the first ten years of Macon county 260 marriage licenses were issued. During the first eight years there was not one divorce.

Daniel McCall, who came to Macon county from Fayette county in 1829, was a sort of handy man at the time the county was getting its start. He was the first county clerk, the first postmaster, the first circuit clerk, the first judge of the probate court, holding most of these offices at the same time. He was census taker in 1830, was a school teacher, a notary public, served in the Black Hawk war, and was otherwise useful. However, his usefulness came to an end because of his habits, and after a few years residence here, he left the county.[2]

David Manley was the county's first coroner.

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[1] In 1830 there were eight road districts. Road supervisors were among the most important men of the day then. Among the men who were serving in that capacity in 1831 were John Blankenship, John Ward, Andrew Wilson, J. A. Piatt, Charles Hanks, William Hanks, and Elisha Butler. At the last meeting of the county commissioners in 1831 it was reported that John Ward had died, and his widow asked to be released from the responsibility of keeping up the ferry he had been running. Her request was granted.

[2] One time it was necessary to draft H. M. Gorin to act as county clerk for two days while McCall was incapacitated. At first McCall's excuses got by the commissioners. Patience came to an end, however, for in 1834 he was discharged as circuit clerk and H. M. Gorin appointed, and in 1837 H. M. Gorin was duly elected to the office. After that McCall's name appears no more in the records.

CHAPTER VI

THE PIONEER AT HOME

THE humble log cabin of a century ago was a humble home indeed, yet it surpassed in one respect many a millionaire's mansion today. Though a single room housed a big family—sometimes more than one—there was always room for the stranger, the new settler or the traveler. The genuine hospitality of the early settler has been the theme of many a story.

The pioneer had little, but that little he generously shared with one who had less. If necessary, he was willing to give all he had. It was nothing to travel mile after mile through bottomless mud and swollen streams to see a sick neighbor. No distance was too far if some one needed help. When the newcomer arrived everybody droppd his own affairs and went to work to "raise" a cabin for him.

To have charged a fee for a night's lodging would have been the height of impropriety and would not have been tolerated. To have refused to lend a tool would have aroused the whole neighborhood to resentment.

A man's word was as good as his bond. Implicit confidence in one another prevailed. No matter what sacrifice was required a man met any promise he had made. It was considered a reflection on one's integrity if one were asked to give a note in promise of payment.

FIGHTING COMMON

A man's character was not to be assailed lightly in those days. The pioneer was quick to resent a real or imaginary wrong. Slander cases were quite common. A man was always ready for a fight. Life on the frontier was not only a battle with nature, but often a battle with fists with the other fellow.

The word "liar" always brought on a fight. It was the signal to go. Though fighting was a violation of the law, the authorities winked at it A justice of the peace once said: "Boys, if you must fight, fight

PIONEER LOG CABIN

where I can't see you. If I see you fighting I will have to arrest and fine you."

But when a fight did occur, it settled the difficulty. The man who was beaten acknowledged it. The combatants shook hands and were friends again. No one lay in a dark alley with a blackjack waiting for his enemy. He settled the matter in the broad, open light of day, with plenty of witnesses. A good fight always enlivened any occasion.

A fight was not always the result of a quarrel. If a man had a reputation for being the "best" man he had to defend that reputation. Two good men would go out of their way to meet each other and settle the question as to who was the better man. Did it matter that a fellow was all bruised up and bleeding when he got through? No, no! His honor was at stake!

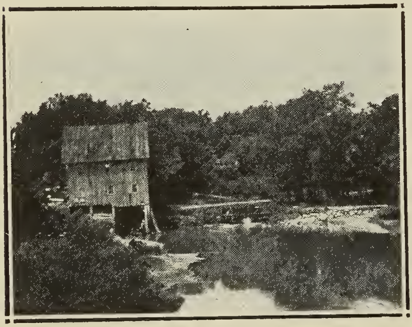
The pioneer lived the simple life—simple in reality, not make-believe. He had more leisure than the man of today. He raised enough crops for his own use only. Why raise more when there was no place to sell? His home was as good as his neighbor's; there was no need for anything grander.

AMUSEMENTS

So when his corn and wheat and flax were harvested, he had little to do but hunt and fish. To vary the entertainment, there were horse races, shooting matches, deer hunts, fox and wolf chases, ax throwing exhibitions, jumping and wrestling matches, dancing, and trials of strength.

Ax throwing was somewhat dangerous, but it proved one's skill. A small area would be marked on a tree, and the aim of each thrower was to stick the ax blade inside that area.

The horse racing became popular at the mills, while the men were waiting their turn to have their corn ground. The racing horses were the common farm stock, and cows and other animals were wagered on the outcome of the races. Often "roughhouses" resulted, for whisky was drunk freely. Some of the earliest mills in Macon county were King's mill on Stevens creek, Allen's mill on the



AN OLD MILL

This picture of the old John Morrison mill on Salt Creek, in Dewitt county, is typical of mills in early Macon County.

Sangamon, the Davis mill on Big Creek, and the Robert Smith and Whitley mills southwest of Decatur.

In those days a popular fellow was the man who could play the fiddle. The fiddle was the only kind of musical instrument to be had, and the fiddler was always sure of an invitation to every party. Most of the fiddlers of the early day were unable to play by note, but they produced the music, and that was all that was necessary.

Being in a position to hear much gossip, the fiddler usually was a veritable news gatherer—and dispenser also.

Singing schools, house raisings, corn shuckings—any of the occasions that served to bring the people together—furnished the social life.

Keeping the fireplace supplied with wood was practically the only work to be done in the winter time. The fire was never allowed to die out winter or summer. There were no matches then, and if the fire died out it was necessary to go to neighbors for live coals to rekindle it.

The pioneer was skilled in the use of the ax. With it he could build his house, without nails, screws or locks.

Cabins were usually built at the edge of the timber, sites where water and wood were plentiful being chosen. No one then was so wild as to dream that some day the prairie would be inhabited. The most that was claimed was that farms would extend a short distance out from the timber. Prairie land would be forever wild and used for grazing purposes only.

The prairies were submerged with water a good part of the year. Horses and cattle mired on ground that is now the best farming land in the county. There were no plows suitable to break the tough prairie sod.

At first there were no fences, and animals roamed at will. When fences did come, they were built to keep the stock out, instead of keeping it in. This was according to a decision of the Supreme court, and it was a big drawback to the farmers. To build and keep in repair the fences needed to protect his crop, cost the farmer more than the land itself.

Money was so scarce that sometimes a letter lay unclaimed for weeks because of lack of cash to pay the postage on it. A man could haul wheat by wagon to Chicago, Springfield or St. Louis and get for a bushel only half enough to buy a yard of calico.

PLENTY TO EAT

One thing the pioneer usually had in plenty, and that was something to eat. Deer, bear, turkeys, ducks, quail, squirrels, rabbits, prairie chickens abounded. The river contained plenty of fish. Each settler had his truck patch, where he grew corn and other vegetables. Hogs and cattle were raised. Greens were to be had for the picking. Johnny cake and corn pone, and mush and milk, added to the pioneer's diet. Maple sugar and honey were plentiful, and in season there were wild fruits. One can easily imagine the pioneer's appetite.

For kitchen ware the earliest comers had only vessels called "noggens," hollowed out of wood. Some had tin and pewter ware. The drinking cup usually was a gourd. The Dutch oven, kettle and frying pan were necessities.

Furniture was home made. If an extra bed were needed, a few poles were quickly secured, and an ax and an augur were all the implements necessary to fashion them together properly.

Carding and spinning of flax and wool, weaving it into cloth and then making it into clothes was one of the chief duties of the women. Every cabin had its spinning wheel and loom. The women made their own soap with lye made from wood ashes, and their own starch from wheat bran.

THE "SHAKES"

One of the worst hardships of the early settlers was the annual recurrence of the malaria, a disease which could not be avoided in this undrained swampy land.[1] It was called by various names, the ague, chills and fever, and the "Illinois shakes." It spared no one and was intensely severe. Often entire families would be ill at one time.

Many a prospective settler, after coming to Illinois—lured by glowing accounts of the land—packed up his belongings and left after one siege of "the shakes."

THE DEEP SNOW

There were two memorable events in the lives of the early citizens of central Illinois, which became milestones in reckoning dates. The first was the deep snow in the winter of 1830-31. For years afterwards dates were mentioned as "before or after the deep snow."

Snow began falling in the early winter and continued for months, each downfall being succeeded by heavy sleet which formed a crust of ice. Finally the snow became so deep that tops of fences could not be seen, and one could drive right over them.[2]

People were housed up for weeks, and there was much suffering, though no loss of life. Many wild animals and game perished, however. Deer, caught in the snow, could be killed without the aid of guns. Game was scarce for years afterward.

SUDDEN FREEZE

Then in January, 1836, occurred the "sudden freeze," which also caused intense suffering. The freeze came about 4 o'clock in the afternoon of a rainy day. Animals out in the field, and chickens, geese, ducks, were caught in ice, the water freezing about their feet. Streams and ponds were stretches of ice. It was so cold that it was said that boiling water thrown into the air came down as particles of ice.

In other parts of the state several lives were lost during the sudden freeze. People caught out on the prairie and unable to find shelter froze to death. Dr. Thomas H. Read of Decatur, on his way to see a patient, almost lost his life in that way.

Another event of interest was the heavy rainfall in 1835, which resulted in raising the Sangamon higher than it had ever been known before. The water drained off slowly.

But all these hardships were endured by the pioneers, and they stayed. They were the ones who made the prairie a fit place to live, and to them is due the honor and respect and admiration of the succeeding generations who have reaped the benefits.

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[1] Quinine was found in the saddlebags of every doctor of the early day. It was given for "The Shakes". Many years the county had to suffer from this disease. It did not disappear until a general system of farm drainage took the water off the prairies. Then the farmers weren't thinking of waging war against the disease when they started the drainage systems, but were undertaking it with the idea of increased production of their farms. It served both purposes, however. The mosquitoes disappeared, malaria was known no more, and the farm land was greatly improved.

[2] Nathaniel Brown, the first blacksmith in Friend's creek township, came to Illinois from Tennessee in 1830, just after the snow fell. He moved into a house he bought, and the man who sold it told him it was enclosed by a seven-rail fence. The purchaser was unable to get a sight of that fence until the following spring, when the snow melted.

CHAPTER VII

SOME EARLY RESIDENTS

WILLIAM Warnick, Macon county's first sheriff, appointed to that office in 1829, was a fine physical specimen of the sturdy pioneer. That he was recognized as a capable officer, as well, was shown in the fact that he held the position of sheriff from the time of the organization of the county in 1829 until 1834, and then was elected again in 1840 and served two years.

Mr. Warnick was also the first tax collector, but neither the job nor the salary connected with it was a burden to him. For collecting the taxes for the year 1829 he was paid $6. No doubt that was as much as it was worth, for there wasn't much to collect.

Mr. Warnick was born in 1784 in North Carolina, and later removed to Rutherford county, Tenn. In the year 1825 he came to Illinois, settling in Macon county in Blue Mound township. He lived first in a log cabin across the road from the land he afterwards bought. In that home Abraham Lincoln was laid up for a time with frozen feet.

In 1830 Mr. Warnick bought the west half of the northwest quarter of section 35 from his brother-in-law, Benjamin Wilson, and in 1833 bought the east half from Robert Peebles. On the latter ground he erected the house which afterwards became known as the Thirty-three mile house. This house, still standing today, has been known for years as the Hudelson home.

In 1835 Mr. Warnick entered from the government the forty acres on which he had first lived, and the forty east of it, but did not receive his patent until 1838.

WARNICK HOME (THIRTY-THREE MILE HOUSE) (As it appears today)

POPULAR TAVERN

The Thirty-three mile house was a popular tavern for many years. It was so named because it was thirty-three miles from Springfield. The tavern also was called the Eight-mile house, because it was eight miles from Decatur. It was located on the old Terre Haute-Springfield road, over which the tide of emigration poured for years.

The tavern was conducted by John Eckel, into whose hands the land passed in 1843 at a sheriff's sale, after Warnick had become financially embarrassed by going security for neighbors. Eckel made many improvements on the house. No doubt Lincoln often stopped at this tavern during his travels.

Mr. Warnick was first lieutenant in Captain Johnson's company of volunteers in the Black Hawk war, and also was captain of a company of Rangers during that war. He was wounded in the engagement known as Stillman's defeat. He was always called Major Warnick, though there is no record to show that he attained that rank, the title being given him unofficially by friends, because of his prowess in fighting Indians.

Mr. Warnick was the father of ten children, and many of his descendants live in Macon county today. He died Feb. 12, 1855.

J. Y. BRADEN

One of the early comers, who became one of the county's most influential farmers, was J. Y. Braden, whose father, Samuel Braden, settled here in 1829. J. Y. Braden was then eleven years old. For nearly twenty years J. Y. Braden lived in Decatur, then he moved to the farm he had purchased in Hickory Point township, and lived there the rest of his life. He bought 80 acres of land in 1848, and added many more to his holdings later. The Illinois Central railroad passed through his farm.

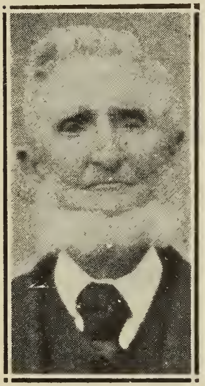
Mr. Braden helped organize the township and lay out roads, and was the first supervisor from Hickory Point township. He held the office of supervisor for six years. He served in other public offices, constable, school treasurer, justice of the peace, member of the county board of agriculture and often was called upon as manager of county fairs and other projects furthered by the farmers.

J. Y. BRADEN

INVEST IN LAND

Macon county, outside of Decatur, was adding substantial residents to its population constantly in the early years of the county Farm land was being taken up, and homes were being established. Some of the farm lands selected then and entered from the government are part of Decatur today.[1]

In the spring of 1834 James Geddes and John Sawyer, cousins, came to Macon county, with money sewed in their belts to invest in land. Geddes had $1,600 and Sawyer $2,200. The two had been boys together in Lebanon county, Pa. They had worked hard, had saved their money and then decided to "go west." They brought with them Ben Berkshire, the first negro to come to this county.


JAMES GEDDES

Decatur looked good to the young men. They spent several days looking around and getting acquainted. They believed the place had good prospects and they decided to locate. Geddes entered a tract of 160 acres of land, about where the Wabash property now is located, and there he built a log cabin. He constantly added to his land holdings until he had as much as 1,300 acres. Occasionally he would have to sell off a tract to pay taxes.

Sawyer selected 120 acres, which included what afterwards became known as "The Pines" on East William street. Then he went back to Indiana and brought his bride, who had been Eliza Kettering, here. His first child, Mary, became the wife of Silas Packard. Mrs. Sawyer died in 1848. Sawyer often made trips to Chicago, driving an ox team. In 1850 he went to California to hunt gold, and with a part of his diggings he bought 200 acres on his return. This land he sold later for $10,000.

Mr. Sawyer, in 1853, married Mrs. Harriett Gulick, widow of Levi Gulick. For forty years the Sawyers lived on Sawyer lane, later West Harrison avenue, Decatur. Mr. Sawyer died in 1893.

Benjamin Sawyer, brother of John Sawyer, native of Lebanon county, Pa., came to Macon county in 1836. He operated lumber yards, oil mills and dealt in cattle and land in Illinois and other states. During the gold rush he went to California. From 1869 to 1872 he managed trail herds from Texas north to railroads through Indian Territory. Benjamin Sawyer was unmarried. He died in Macon county in 1879.

THE SPANGLERS

The Spanglers came to the county in the fall of 1835 from York county, Pa. Joseph and Barbara Spangler, the parents, had a family of nine children, eight of whom came to Macon county with them.

Jacob Spangler was the first of the family to come to Illinois, making the trip to look over the country. His report was a favorable one, and the rest of the family then made the journey west.

The Spanglers entered land east and northeast of Decatur, having land in three townships. In 1838 they erected the Spangler mill, well known in the early days.

The present day William street bridge formerly was known as the Spangler bridge.

JACOB SPANGLER

SELLS AT FOURTEEN DOLLARS AN ACRE

William Foren, who came here in 1830 from Huntsville, Ala., owned the farm which later became known as the Johns property, now the site of the Washington grade school and Johns Hill Junior high school. Mrs. Foren was dissatisfied here and wanted to return south, so Mr. Foren sold the land to William Martin, father of Mrs. Jane M. Johns, at $14 an acre. Mr. Foren formerly had a meat market about where the Brunswick hotel now stands. His daughter, Ann Foren, married Samuel McKinley, who had located here in 1834.

McKinley, who was only 18 years old when he first came here, was an apprentice of E. O. Smith and Benjamin Dillehunt and later became a partner of Smith. McKinley sold his town property in 1856 and bought a farm of 160 acres four and one-half miles north of Decatur on the Bloomington road. For that land he paid $25 an acre. Some of his neighbors the year before had entered government land at $1.25 an acre. The increase in value of land, which came with the advent of the railroads, was quickly becoming apparent.

WILLIAMS LAND

Mr. and Mrs. Andrew S. Williams had extensive land holdings in the north part of Decatur, north of what is now Grand avenue. They came to Macon county in 1836. Mrs. Williams taught school in the early days, first in her home and later in a building erected on the Williams land. Mr. Williams also at one time owned the land known as College hill.

ROBINSON FAMILY

One early settler, who entered, from the government, land which is now a part of the city, was Amos Robinson, who came in 1830 from Royalton, Vt.[2] He lived only about six years after coming here, but was active during those early years in the history of the county. He was one of the men who helped to build the old log court house. His son, Hartwell, was identified with the business life of Decatur until his death in 1856.

The Robinson land was in the west section of the city. The Springfield road (now West Main street and Route 10) passed through their land. It was part of this land which later came into possession of James Millikin, and became the site of his home and the university.

The Robinsons lived first on the north side of what is now the 900 block West Main street. After Amos Robinson located here, he procured 100 apple trees and he and his boys set them out. Within two or three years the trees were bearing big crops of apples. Amos Robinson died about 1836, and was buried in the family burial plot in the midst of the orchard he had set out a few years before.

Before the elder man's death, father and son had started a chair factory, located where the Y. M. C. A. annex now stands. In that shop a horse was used to turn the lathe. For years Hartwell Robinson made tables, bureaus, chairs, window sash, etc. About 1850 he started a lumber mill and shop in what is now the 900 block West Main street.[3] He also ran a grocery store on the present site of the Parlor meat market.

Marilla Robinson, daughter of Amos Robinson, married Dayton Dunham. Amos Dunham, for whom Dunham Post, G. A. R. was named, was a son of Mr. and Mrs. Dayton Dunham.

About 1845 Hartwell Robinson erected a brick house on the south side of the road passing his home. He was married that year to Fairazina Morris, and all their married life they lived in that home. In 1856 Mr. Robinson sold the place to Peter Laux, and built a new residence in the 900 block West Prairie, but just as the last door was being hung he died. His widow and children moved to the new home. Both these Robinson homes stood for many years.

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[1] Land was cheap in the 30s. J. F. Montgomery, father of the late R. R. Montgomery, bought a lot in the 100 block South Main street for a hat. Evidently some one felt a hat was more valuable than the real estate. Mr. Montgomery bought the east half of the block on the north side of 100 block East Main street, cornering on Water, for $35. He first put up a little tailor shop there, and later erected a better building, two stories high. Then the Sons of Temperance added a third story to it. When that building was burned in the fire of 1859 Mr. Montgomery's loss was $1,000.

Land was cheap until after the railroads came in 1854. The Packards once sold some land around College square at $2.50 an acre, and patted themselves on the back for getting such a good price.

Edmund Packard, when getting ready to go to California to hunt gold, traded 10 acres now in the midst of Decatur to Rev. William S. Crissey for a gold watch and chain, and thought he had the best end of the bargain!

[2] The Robinson, the Packard, and the Hunting families came together to Macon county. A letter written by Mrs. Robinson to home folks, on Sept. 8, tells of their safe arrival after a fatiguing journey. They had arrived July 26. On Sept. 8, the day the letter was written, Mr. Packard died. Mrs. Robinson deplored the fact that they were all ill with the chills and ague and unable to attend the funeral of their friend, Mr. Packard. That was Silas Packard, Sr., father of the Silas Packard, whose name appears elsewhere in this history. Mrs. Robinson's letter is given here:

"Decatur, Sept. 8, 1830.

"My dear children, with faint and faltering steps I tread to the table once more to attempt to write you. We had a long and fatiguing journey, but not any sickness to detain us one day. We arrived here July the 26 all in health, but very much fatigued with our journey, but it has been uncommonly sickly here this season and we do not escape.

"God has seen fit to lay his afflicting hand upon us and leaving us all down at a time. Yes, and so very sick for some days that there was not one able to carry a drink of water to the other among the five, but thanks be to God our lives are saved, while others are taken. We are now recovering in health slowly. We have got able to dress ourselves and walk about the room very little.

"Now I take your attention to the doleful news. Mr. Packard is no more. He departed this life this morning at about 1 o'clock, was sick but seven or eight days, and never has been thought to be dangerous until last evening. He never has manifested any alarm about himself in his sickness and died in a bewildered state. Furthermore, I must add that the family are all sick like, save Mrs. Packard is only able to walk from one room to the other. I am told she bears her trouble as yet with great composure.

"Mr. Hunting's family likewise are all sick save the oldest son. Not one of us will be able to attend the funeral, which is appointed tomorrow at seven o'clock. This is a solemn time, indeed, with us, only two miles distant, and we must be deprived of beholding even the corpse of our ever faithful and worthy friend. The disorder of which he died, is called fever and ague, together with the nervous fever. The fever and ague and chill fever have been our disorder and is very frequent in this vicinity, especially to new settlers.

"This our friend's death is greatly lamented by all who knew him, and as for your father, his expectations are apparently all cut off. He has ever been willing to confide in his judgment at all times, and finally in a word we were all of us making great dependence on Mr. Packard's assisting us, but alas, is not this to show that we must not put our trust in mortal man. Yet I know not where to leave speaking of him, for this is the theme of our lives. Our hearts are sad in mourning, and hung on the weeping willows of grief. Of the bereft widow, her loss cannot be estimated, and those dear little children deprived of a kind and affectionate parent at this critical period of life, when so much needed with them. May the Lord take these little ones in his arms and bless them and be a father to the fatherless and the widow's god and guide."

Here is part of a letter written by Hartwell Robinson, then about 18 years old, to his brother back east, Jan. 31, 1833.

"It was a very cold spring and summer. Good corn fit for seed is so scarce that it is $1 per bushel. We sold our youngest horse for $60. We sold the harness for $25, took two cows and one calf, seven hogs, and one day's work. Sold our wagon for $45, to be paid in breaking fifteen acres of prairie and 1500 of rails. We went to live with the man that bought our youngest horse. He asked us $25 for getting our wood three months, $12 for wintering our other horse, the cow and calf died. He asked 37½ cents per week for wintering our cow that lived.

"Marm made from the cow sixty weight of cheese and butter so that we have it plenty through the summer and fall, and have some yet. Marm had no cheese press so she had to press them by setting them under the bed post.

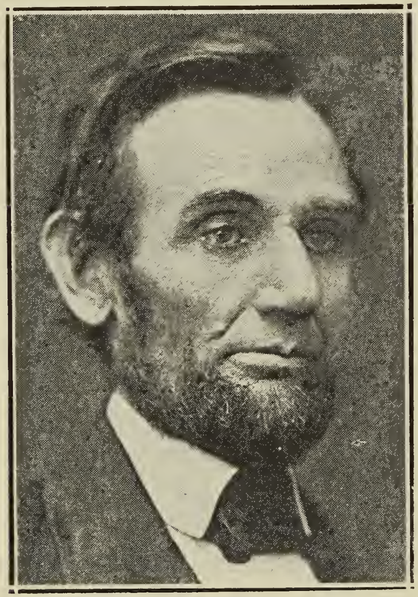
"Timber here is mostly oak and walnut, some black walnut and a little cherry. Father has now sold his tools to pay some of his debts. There is two saw mills putting up within two miles of us. Dunham talks of going back to York state. He has sold some of his things. We received a letter from Amos last fall. He writ that you was married. Every newcomer that comes in here very seldom escapes the ague one year. I believe that I have thought of about everything worth mentioning except to tell you that we sold the other horse last fall for $80 to pay the merchants."

[3] From a spring on the land they stored enough water in a well to run this mill. Machinery for this mill, including engine and boiler, were brought later from Springfield on wagons drawn by oxen. Dayton Dunham and son, Henry, went to Springfield to get the machinery. Henry Dunham, it is believed, is at the time of this writing (1930), the oldest native born resident of Decatur. He was born in this city April 22, 1838.

CHAPTER VIII

ABRAHAM LINCOLN

IT'S time to be on my way." The words may not have been uttered aloud, but they were in the mind of Abraham Lincoln during the brief period of time in which Macon county claimed him as a resident.



ABRAHAM LINCOLN

It was the turning point of his life. He was just twenty-one, just old enough to think it was time for him to be setting out in the world for himself.

That his "way" would eventually lead him to the heights he attained probably did not enter the thoughts of the ungainly youth as he trudged along the Sangamon and over the prairie sod in Macon county, though he did have visions of broader things than his life up to this time had brought him.

Macon county may be said to be a "university" in which Lincoln received a year of his educational training. It was in this county that he had his real start in life. Here he studied his first law books; here he made his first political speeches. His career as lawyer, politician and public speaker, which finally led him—though over a road of disappointments—to the highest position his country could offer him, had its humble beginning in Macon county.

THE MIGRATION

The Lincolns came to Macon county from Spencer county, Ind., in 1830, arriving near the middle of the month of March. It had taken two weeks or more for the journey.

Thomas Lincoln, father of Abraham, was always ready to move, when he thought he could better himself, and when Cousin John

Hanks, who had already located in Macon county, sent back word to Indiana advising the folks there to pull up stakes and come, too, Lincoln was not averse to the idea.

Dennis Hanks, whose wife was the daughter of Mrs. Lincoln, had resolved to get out of Indiana, after an epidemic of "milk sick," which had nearly ruined him. In one week he had lost four cows and eleven calves, besides being ill himself.

Dennis Hanks had been in Macon county before, having come once on a visit, and he was well satisfied to locate here, too.

So the Lincolns made ready for the journey to a new location. Thomas Lincoln sold for $125 the 80 acres of land he had entered in Indiana, and also a lot in Elizabethtown, Ky., which belonged to his wife, for which he received $123. An iron bound wagon, which was the first and only one he ever owned, was purchased (or made) and it was loaded with beds and bedding, table, bureau, set of chairs, chest and cooking utensils. A cow, an extra horse, and a little dog were brought, too.

There were three wagons altogether in the caravan. One of them was drawn by two teams of horses, and the other two by two yoke of oxen each. Abraham Lincoln drove one of the wagons.

Thirteen persons were in the party in the Lincoln migration from Indiana to Illinois. They were:

Thomas Lincoln, his wife, Sarah Bush Johnston Lincoln; Abraham Lincoln, son of Thomas, and John D. Johnston, son of Mrs. Lincoln, a family of four;

The Squire Hall family, which included Squire Hall, his wife, Matilda Johnston Hall (daughter of Mrs. Thomas Lincoln), and their son, John Johnston Hall, a family of three;

MRS. SARAH BUSH LINCOLN

The Dennis Hanks family of six, including Dennis Hanks, his wife, Elizabeth Johnston Hanks (daughter of Mrs. Thomas Lincoln), and their four children, Sarah Jane Hanks (later Mrs. Thomas Dowling), Nancy Hanks (later Mrs. James Shoaff), Harriet Hanks (later Mrs. Gus Chapman), and John Talbot Hanks.

It was a hard journey—but the Lincolns were used to hardships. It was still so cold that the ground and water would freeze at night, and then, during the day it would thaw. It made traveling hard for the oxen.

LIBRARY UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS

At Vincennes the party ferried across the Wabash river. It was at Vincennes where Abraham Lincoln saw a printing press for the first time.

The Okaw river had to be forded, and in making the crossing the party nearly lost one of its wagons.

The story has often been told of one incident of the trip, when the little dog was rescued by Abraham Lincoln. It was left behind at one stream, refusing to swim the water. Abraham, pitying the poor little fellow as it ran up and down the bank, whining at being separated from the party, waded through the stream, picked up the dog and carried it across in his arms.

The Lincolns, no doubt, came into Macon county over the old Springfield-Paris road, turning north at Mt. Gilead, and coming in to Decatur on the Shelbyville road. They probably crossed the Sangamon on John Ward's ferry.

They stopped the afternoon of their arrival on the public square (now Lincoln square), near the southeast corner. A tablet on the west wall of the West drug store building marks the spot. Lincoln himself pointed out the place in 1856. He then told of driving into Decatur, to camp later in the edge of the city.

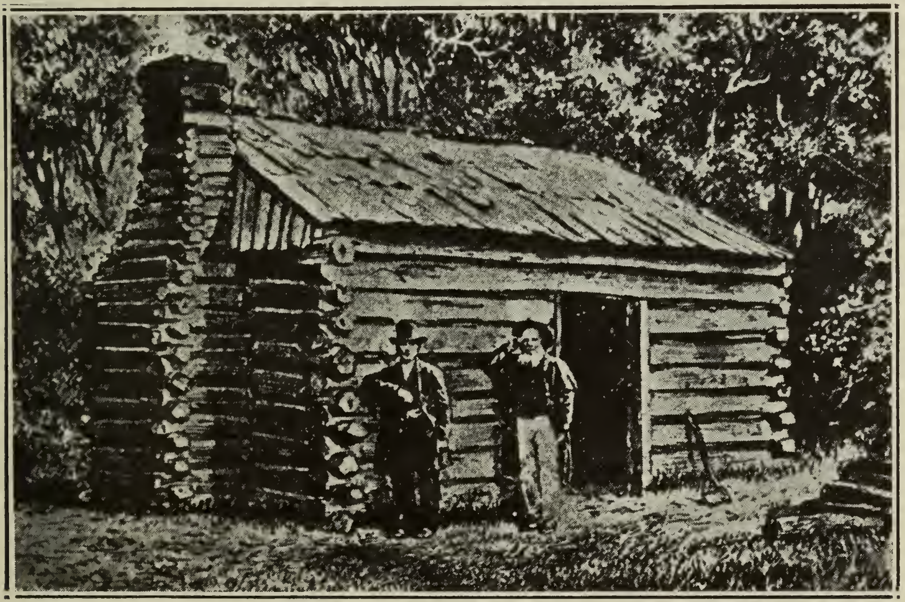
BUILD CABIN

Next morning John Hanks escorted them to his home northwest of Decatur. The Hanks' cabin was located in Hickory Point township, about a half mile east of Boiling Springs. When John Hanks first came to Macon county he had intended building a cabin on the Sangamon river south of Harristown, not far from his father's farm, and had cut logs for it, but being unable to get the sod broken, he had changed his mind, and located in Hickory Point instead. When the Lincolns arrived, Hanks offered them the logs still lying at the Sangamon river site, and the Lincolns accepted them. The location suited, so there they stayed and erected their cabin out of the logs cut by their kinsman.

The Lincoln cabin stood on a high bluff 300 feet above Whitley's mill. It sat more than 100 feet back from the stream, and from the home one could look down to the river. This location is shown on the old map in the Lincoln room in the Decatur public library. The map was published in 1865. As the cabin was still standing in the early part of that year, it doubtless is correct. The location is decribed as the southeast quarter of the southwest quarter of Section 28, township 16, range 1 east of the 3rd principal meridian.

Abraham Lincoln, then a strong, able-bodied youth more than 6 feet tall, helped put up the cabin, smoke house and barn. The cabin was of hewed logs, and doors and floors were puncheon. The few nails which were used in building the cabin had been brought from Indiana. The size of the cabin was 16 by 16 feet. A common ax, a broad ax, a handsaw and a "drawer knife" were the tools the Lincolns possessed. As soon as the house was up, Abraham split rails to fence in about ten acres of ground. Then he broke up the ground and planted corn.

The land on which the Lincolns lived is now owned by James T. Whitley. It was entered from the government in 1836 by Perry Strickland. Neither Thomas Lincoln nor his son Abraham ever bought any land in Macon county. Both left the following year after their arrival. The Lincoln cabin stood for many years and for a time was used as a school house. Little thought was given to it, until after the assassination of President Lincoln. Then, in 1865, it was taken apart and shipped to Chicago for exhibition at the Northwestern Sanitary fair, and later was exhibited on Boston Common. After that it was sold to an English syndicate to be shipped to England, and is supposed to have been lost in transit.



FIRST ILLINOIS HOME OF A. LINCOLN
The two men are Dennis (left) and John Hanks. T. B. Shoaff (owner of original photograph) says this was the only picture taken of the cabin before its removal from near the Sangamon river.

Dr. William E. Barton, noted Lincoln historian, made a search of the records to learn about the exhibition of the cabin on Boston Common, and also in Chicago. It was rather odd that after a long search the first evidence he found of the exhibition in Chicago was an article in the Boston Transcript on June 15, 1865, which told of the Northwestern Sanitary fair then in progress in Chicago. The cabin was exhibited at the corner of Randolph street and Wabash avenue, then on the lake front. John and Dennis Hanks were in attendance, and gave visitors interesting items of their experiences with Lincoln. They carried a letter of identification from Governor Richard J. Oglesby.

The fair in Chicago closed June 24, 1865. The cabin had been shipped to Chicago about June 1. Dennis Hanks had with him at that time a razor which had been used by Thomas Lincoln, and later occasionally by Abraham Lincoln. It was then about seventy years old. Abraham Lincoln rarely shaved himself, and probably did not use the razor often.

NOTED VISITORS

The cabin was given considerable prominence in the Sanitary fair publication, "The Voice of the Fair," according to Dr. Barton. Hundreds of people visited it daily during the fair.

On June 8 in connection with a statement regarding the cabin, "The Voice of the Fair" said:

"Governor R. J. Oglesby paid his respects to the old cabin on Monday, and when he entered within its enclosure, taking John Hanks by the hand, he exclaimed:

" 'Well, John, this is certainly the identical Lincoln cabin. I have been in it, many years ago. My feelings are sad. I realize where I am'."

Sometime in the latter part of July, 1865, the cabin was set up on Boston Common. There it again attracted hundreds of visitors, among them many notable persons. One item in The Advertiser of July 29 tells of the visit of the Marquis of Drogheda and his lady. They spent considerable time in examining the relic and her ladyship, after purchasing some articles made from the wood of the cabin site, remarked:

"I wish very much to take home these to show our people; for my husband is one of those in our country who admired President Lincoln's character."

The Marquis and lady expressed their pleasure at having met Uncle John Hanks, who did not know until afterwards that he had been entertaining English nobility.

General U. S. Grant and his staff also visited the cabin.

The handbill advertising the cabin, a copy of which Dr. Barton secured, stated that half of the net proceeds from the exhibition would be devoted to the erection of a monument to the memory of Thomas Lincoln. An admission fee of 25 cents for adults and 10 cents for children was charged.

Thomas B. Shoaff, of Shelbyville, Ill., grandson of Dennis Hanks, and great grandson of Sarah Bush Johnston Lincoln, remembers well the circumstances concerning the dismantling of the cabin and sending it away for exhibit. His father, James Shoaff, at that time was publishing the Decatur Magnet at Decatur, Ill. James Shoaff numbered the logs plainly before shipment was made.

"Grandfather Dennis Hanks has told me many times how people wept on seeing the cabin," says Thomas B. Shoaff.

BLUFF AT LINCOLN CABIN SITE (as it is today)

Mr. Shoaff sent some walnut rails, taken from the Lincoln cabin site, by express to Boston, after the cabin was shipped there for exhibition. The rails were fashioned into souvenirs and sold. Mr. Shoaff remembers that the express charge on the rails was $14.

The story told at various times to the effect that the cabin was exhibited at the centennial exhibition in Philadelphia in 1876 is incorrect. The cabin has never been heard of since the time it was sold to the English syndicate for shipment to England in 1865, according to Mr. Shoaff, and it is generally supposed that it was lost in passage

CHAPTER IX

ABRAHAM LINCOLN

(Continued)

DURING the year that Abraham Lincoln lived in Macon county he did not particularly distinguish himself, except that he began to gain a reputation for wrestling and for making speeches. Life to him then was about the same as that of the average young man of the period. He did, however, spend more time in study than the ordinary youth. Always anxious to learn, he never let pass an opportunity to gain knowledge.

He had what might have been called a fairly good education at that time. He could read, write, spell, and cipher to the "rule of three." He had read a number of books, among them the Bible, Life of Washington by Weems, Life and Speeches of Henry Clay, Pilgrim's Progress, Revised Laws of Indiana (1824), History of United States, Life of Marion, Life of Franklin, Robinson Crusoe, Aesop's Fables, Murray's Reader, Arabian Nights, the Kentucky Preceptor, and Webster's Blue Backed Speller, and an etymological dictionary.

Lincoln's reading was more than mere reading. It was study. He memorized a great deal of what he read, and he gave serious thought to all of it. Such a list of books as that given, read in Lincoln's way, was enough to provide a fairly good education in itself.

After Abraham Lincoln had helped his father get settled in their new home on the Sangamon river bluff, he went out to look for a job. All summer he worked for others, splitting rails, chopping wood, plowing, harvesting. He broke up fifty acres of prairie land, with four yoke of oxen.

Some of his work went to pay for new clothes. He bargained with Mrs. Nancy Miller to make him a pair of trousers. For every yard of brown jeans cloth used, he agreed to split 400 rails. It took a good deal of material to cover the long-legged Lincoln. No wonder he didn't get new clothes often! A fair price for splitting rails in those days was 37½ cents a hundred in trade or 25 cents in cash.

No doubt the young Abe soon got acquainted with the young folks of the neighborhood, for he attended the "spellings" and "singing bees" held at the log school house southwest of Decatur. The story goes that he courted Mary (Polly) Warnick, but evidently not for long, as she was married in June to another man, Joseph Stevens.

It gave Stevens something to brag about, anyhow, for all his life he boasted of having cut Lincoln out!

Jemima Hill was another girl Lincoln escorted home from gatherings. That probably meant little, however, as in going from his own home to the school house Lincoln scarcely had to go out of his way to reach the Hill home.

In fact, even though it was spring and Lincoln was a young fellow of 21, he probably had no serious love affairs, after he came to Macon county.

He was one of the guests at the wedding of his former sweetheart, Polly Warnick, and Joe Stevens, according to tradition.

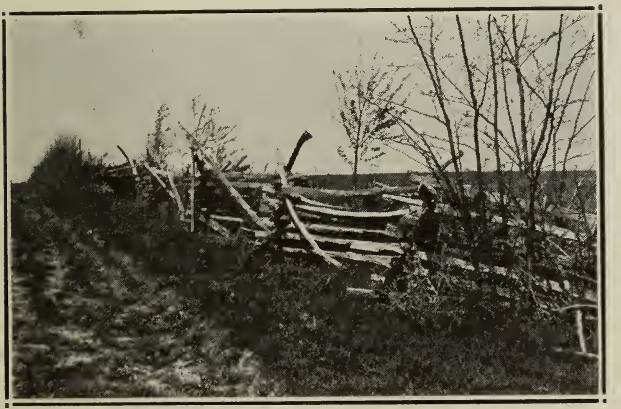
Lincoln was a handy man to have around when there was rail splitting to be done in the neighborhood. He was a master hand at the business, according to Dennis Hanks, who said one day:

"He was a master hand at maulin' rails; my, how he could chop! His ax would flash and bite into a tree and down it would come. If you heard him fallin' trees in a clearing, you would say three men were at work by the way the trees fell. He could sink an ax deeper into wood than any man I ever saw."

Lincoln and John Hanks made rails for William Warnick. In the Hudelson house is a walnut rail, which was kept by Robert Hudelson, and which was said to be from a lot of 3,000 rails made by Lincoln.

HIS SPEECHES

Wearing a broad brimmed straw hat, a "hickory" shirt, tight tow linen trousers, and with feet bare, Lincoln made one of his first political speeches in front of the Harrell tavern which then stood on the present site of Central block, on the square which bears his name. The tavern was a two-story building, with long veranda on the south. In front were several trees, one of which had broken off, leaving a splint-


LINCOLN RAIL FENCE ON SCROGGIN FARM

ery stump. Lincoln, according to the story of that speech as told afterward by Mrs. Harrell, was working for a Mr. Shepherd who had land west of what is now Church street and north of West Main. One day while plowing with oxen in the field there, Lincoln heard the sound of cheering on the square, and with a youth's curiosity, stopped his team and went over to see what was going on.

He found a crowd of men listening to a Democrat making a political speech and having considerable to say against the Old Line Whig party, the party to which Lincoln adhered. It was more than Lincoln could stand. The minute the speaker was through, up hopped Lincoln to the splintery stump. The crowd pressed forward, eager to see what was going to happen. With all the fervor and tenseness of his nature, the tall, lank young fellow refuted the attacks on his party.

The splinters must have been hard on those bare feet, for the young man had to shift his position often. But the speech was made. The party was defended. And the crowd cheered wildly! Then and there Lincoln demonstrated that he could make a speech.

Another time Lincoln made a speech after an address by General Whiteside. It dealt with the navigability of the Sangamon.

"Who's that young fellow?" asked the general.

"His name's Abe Lincoln, but outside of that I don't know anything about him," was I. C. Pugh's reply.

"He's nobody's d—d fool. Some of these days that fellow is going to be heard from!" declared Whiteside.

Lincoln's talks on the navigability of the Sangamon must have been effective. According to another story told, Lincoln one day spoke on that subject just after a speech by a man named Posey. John Hanks used to say that this was Lincoln's first political talk.

Posey took Lincoln to one side and asked him where he had secured his information, and encouraged him to keep on reading and studying.

In January, 1831, Mr. Posey introduced in the legislature a resolution that the "committee on internal improvements be instructed to inquire into the expediency of opening the navigation of the Sangamon river as far as Decatur in Macon county."

Another speech made by Lincoln that was afterwards remembered was given after a wrestling match in William Warnick's harvest field.

Lincoln was gaining considerable reputation as a wrestler, and one day while the harvest hands were taking a brief rest, Jim Owens, champion of that sport, challenged Lincoln to a match. Lincoln threw his opponent, and while still holding him down along came "Jim" Herrod with a bucket of cold water which he dashed on the wrestlers.

"I have always heard," said Herrod, "that the best way to part two fighting dogs is to throw cold water on them."

"Uncle Jimmy" Sanders was Lincoln's pal in those days.[1] At anything from a wedding to a fishing trip the two were seen together. Sanders was a great wrestler himself, and he always told with pride that once he threw Lincoln, who had in turn thrown the bully of the county.

A HARD YEAR

The year which the Lincolns spent in Macon county was the hardest year in the history of the county. During the summer malaria was prevalent, and the winter was made memorable by the deep snow. No wonder Thomas Lincoln decided to move again. It is quite evident that he and his family suffered from the ague and fever, for Thomas Lincoln bought a good deal of "barks" at the Renshaw store. Barks was a mixture of Peruvian bark and whisky.

One incident is told of Lincoln and the deep snow that winter. Lincoln and John Hanks managed to get over to the Robert Smith mill with a grist of corn, to be ground. They found Smith in the field gathering corn. He had one road cut through to the field and was picking the corn left exposed above the top of the snow.

Mr. Smith asked if conditions were as bad on the other side of the river, and Lincoln replied:

"Yes, we have to do worse than that, for we have used up all our corn, and now have to go to the neighbors for assistance."

One day during that winter Lincoln started over to the Warnick home, and got his feet wet in crossing the Sangamon. By the time he reached the Warnick home his feet were frozen, and he was laid up there for weeks.

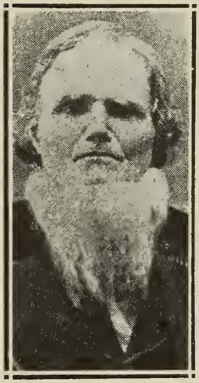
While confined at the Warnick home, Lincoln passed the time by studying Sheriff Warnick's law books.

Thomas Lincoln left Macon county the following spring, expecting to go back to Indiana. He stopped in Coles county, however, and then decided to remain there. He lived in that county the rest of his life.

The same spring Abraham Lincoln left Macon county. Denton Offut, trader, who wanted to send flatboats, filled with produce, down to New Orleans, offered John Hanks and Abraham Lincoln the job of taking the boats down. John Johnston, stepson of Thomas Lincoln, also went along. They were to be paid 50 cents a day, and $60 to be divided at the end of the trip.

From Decatur to Springfield, where they were to meet Offut, they made the trip in a canoe over the Sangamon. This was just about a year after Lincoln had arrived in Macon county. Never again did Abraham Lincoln come back to call Macon county his home. On his return from the trip south Lincoln was offered a job in Offut's store in New Salem. That ended his connection with Macon county, as a home, and opened a new chapter in his life, his career at New Salem.

JOHN HANKS



JOHN HANKS

John Hanks, who was so intimately associated with his cousin, Abraham Lincoln, and who induced Lincoln to make his first public speech, was a picturesque figure. He was one of the earliest settlers in the county, and lived here until his death July 1, 1889.[2] His body lies in Boiling Springs cemetery.

Outside of his connection with Lincoln, he was one of the county's busy citizens.[3] He served on the first and second grand juries, was a ranger in Captain Johnson's company during the Black Hawk war, made numerous trips to New Orleans by flatboat, and in the Civil war was a wagon master in Grant's regiment. During the gold rush he made a trip to California, remaining three years, and after the Civil war made several trips west. He was appointed as Indian agent by President Lincoln.

It is thought that John Hanks was the only one of the Hanks family invited to Abraham Lincoln's wedding. Once after Lincoln was elected president Hanks visited him at the White House.

When John Hanks first settled in the county he built a log cabin in Hickory Point township. That cabin burned about 1866. Mr. Hanks' second home was a brick house. That house is still standing, and is herewith reproduced.

JOHN HANKS' HOME

John Hanks came into the limelight by helping Abraham Lincoln split the rails for the fence for the Lincoln homestead. The rails from this fence—two of which carried the banner at the state Republican convention at the Decatur Wigwam in 1860—became known all over the world.

LINCOLN CABIN SITE (as it appears today)

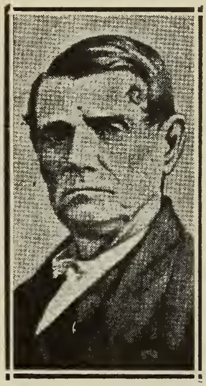
James Hanks, brother of John, built his cabin about a quarter mile north of his brother. William Hanks, Jr., another brother, entered eighty acres of land west of the quarter section on which Decatur was located. His cabin stood on the lot which is now the site of the H. I. Baldwin home, 452 West Main street. Some walnut logs from that cabin were used in the Baldwin house.

It is said that Lincoln often sprawled in the shade of the trees there when he made trips in to town. This land was sold by Mr. Hanks to William T. Crissey. There is a story to the effect that his wife would not sign the deed until she received a new dress.

William Hanks also was a ranger in Johnson's company in the Black Hawk war. He was supervisor of Road District No. 1 for several years after Macon county was formed. He died in January, 1836.

William Hanks, Sr., brother of the grandmother of Lincoln, Lucy Hanks, entered land in Section 22 in Harristown township. He was a member of the grand jury in 1832. He is thought to have died about 1851 or 1852.

DENNIS HANKS



DENNIS HANKS

Dennis Hanks, who came to Macon county with the Lincolns, and left in about a year, lived afterwards in Coles county. He was born May 15, 1799. It was he who was the boyhood chum of Lincoln when the families lived in Kentucky, and it was he who taught Abraham how to read and write.

Dennis Hanks once was sent to Washington, when Lincoln was president, to intercede in behalf of some men who had been imprisoned, without trial, after riots at Charleston, in which nine men had been killed. President Lincoln granted the request of his old-time friend, and the prisoners were set free.

Dennis Hanks died at the home of his daughter, Mrs. James Shoaff, in Paris, Oct. 21, 1892. His wife, Elizabeth, died in 1864. They are buried at Charleston, Ill.

Various other members of the Hanks family located in Macon county, and many of their descendants are present-day citizens.

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[1] "Now, Abe, don't do any wrong", said Uncle Jimmy Sanders to Abraham Lincoln in his last visit with him before Lincoln started to Washington.

"I will not, if I know it," replied Lincoln.

[2] At the time John Hanks came to Macon county in 1829 his family consisted of himself, his wife, Sarah Shrader Hanks ("Aunt Sookey"), William and Jane Hanks (Mettlin). Later the following children were born in the log cabin in which the family lived northwest of Decatur: Emily (Loomis), Mary Ellen (Manon), John Felix Hanks, Grason Hanks and Levi (Toby) Hanks. Mrs. Manon is the only one still living (1930). Her home is in Eureka, Cal. She is eighty-six years old at this writing. John Felix Hanks was drowned at the age of 23 while fording Stevens creek one night on his way home during a storm. The bridge had washed out, and both the young man and the horse he was riding were drowned. That was in the year 1858.

[3] One time when John Hanks was serving on the petit jury, Lincoln drove the horses home for Mrs. Hanks and spent the night at the Hanks home. Mrs. Willis Johnson also was visiting there at the time. While driving back to town the next morning, Lincoln nearly pitched headlong out of the front end of the wagon when he forded Stevens creek. On his way to town he passed the ruins of the old school house which had just burned down.

According to records John Hanks served on the petit jury in May, 1838.

Mrs. Johnson said that Lincoln wore a new suit of blue jeans at that time. It may have been the suit woven for him by Mrs. Samuel Hornback. Lincoln bargained once with Mrs. Hornback, who was a skilled weaver, for a suit of clothes.

CHAPTER X

ABRAHAM LINCOLN

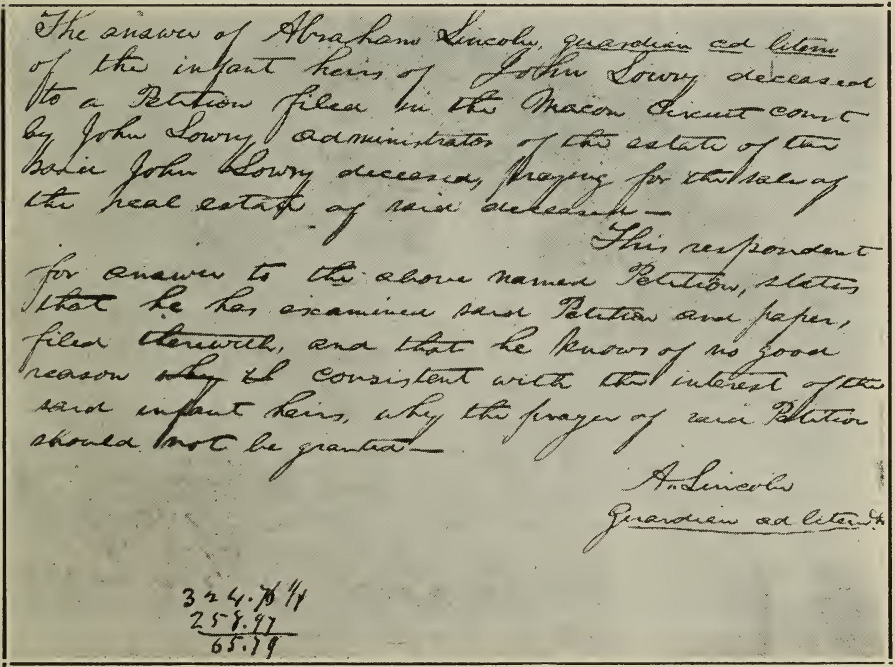
(Concluded)

THOUGH Abraham Lincoln left Macon county in the spring of 1831, and never afterwards made it his home, Decatur has other claims on him.

After Lincoln was admitted to the bar in 1837, he was in Decatur often on law cases, and it was in Decatur that his name first was submitted as a candidate for the presidency of the United States.

One case in which he appeared—of interest because it was heard in the old log court house—was the ex-parte case of John Lowry, administrator, at the May term of court in 1838. John Hanks was on the jury at that time.

Lincoln's reply in the case, in his own handwriting, is among the papers now on file at the Macon county court house.



The answer of Abraham Lincoln, guardian ad litem of the infant heirs of John Lowry deceased to a Petition filed in the Macon Circuit court by John Lowry administrator of the estate of the said John Lowry deceased, praying for the sale of the real estate of said deceased—

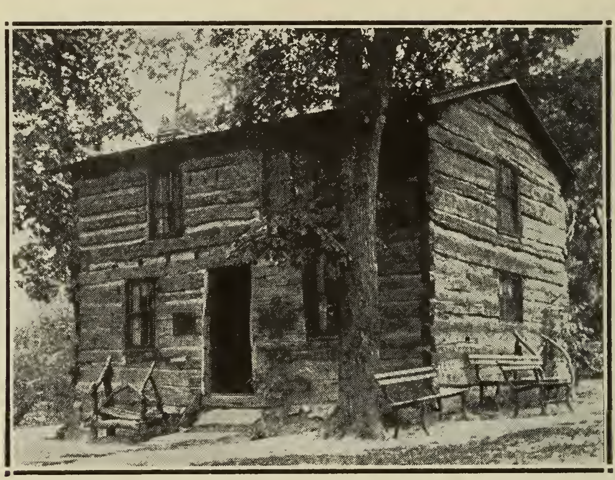
This respondent for answer to the above named Petition, states that he has examined said Petition and papers filed therewith, and that he knows of no good reason ~~why th~~ consistent with the interest of the said infant heirs, why the prayer of said Petition should not be granted—

A. Lincoln
Guardian ad litem

324.76¼
258.97
65.79

LINCOLN DOCUMENT ON FILE AT COURT HOUSE
The answer of Abraham Lincoln, guardian ad litem in case number A-156 (John Lowry), written and signed by Lincoln and filed in the circuit court of Macon county, June 5, 1838.

At the time this case was heard, in May, 1838, Macon county was building its new brick court house.



LOG COURT HOUSE TODAY

The new building was not finished until in June, and was accepted by the county June 20, so there is no doubt but that the old log court house was still in use when the Lowry case came up. This statement is made because some writers have tried to prove that Lincoln never had any law practice here in the old log court house, the building now standing in Fairview park.

COURT WEEK

While traveling the eighth judicial circuit, Lincoln was often in Decatur, it being customary for lawyers to follow the court from county to county.

The Macon house, at the corner of Prairie and Franklin streets, was his stopping place. Because the Macon house was a better class of hostelry than they found in many of the towns they visited, the attorneys always enjoyed their stay in Decatur. In fact, it is said that they prolonged the business of the court in order to remain here longer.

Court week was always a big week. The town was filled to overflowing with visitors. Lawyers, their clients and witnesses naturally would be here, but there was also the usual following of peddlers, show men, gamblers and mere curiosity seekers. Gay social events were arranged for that week. There was always something doing when court week came.

It was while traveling the circuit that Lincoln heard and told so many of the stories which made him so entertaining and so popular. His kindness, honesty and courtesy to everyone did as much, however, to win him friends.

Among many incidents about Lincoln told by Mrs. Jane Martin Johns is the one about his helping with her piano. She was living at the Macon hotel when her piano came, the first in Decatur. She asked the landlord whom she could get to help carry it in. He said:

"Court will be out soon and the lawyers will come to dinner. We can get them to help."

Soon they came, one a tall, slim, muscular man wearing a heavy gray shawl as men wore then. That was Lincoln.

With others he took hold and helped carry in and set up the piano.

"Now," he said, "perhaps this lady will play for us." She did so.

Lincoln was honored by the Illinois newspaper editors when they met in Decatur, Feb. 22, 1856, and took the first steps toward the organization of the Republican party in Illinois. This meeting had been called for the purpose of organizing the Anti-Nebraska bill forces. It was held at the Cassell house (on the site of the St. Nicholas), and after the meeting a banquet was held, at which Lincoln made the principal speech.

CAMPAIGN SPEECHES

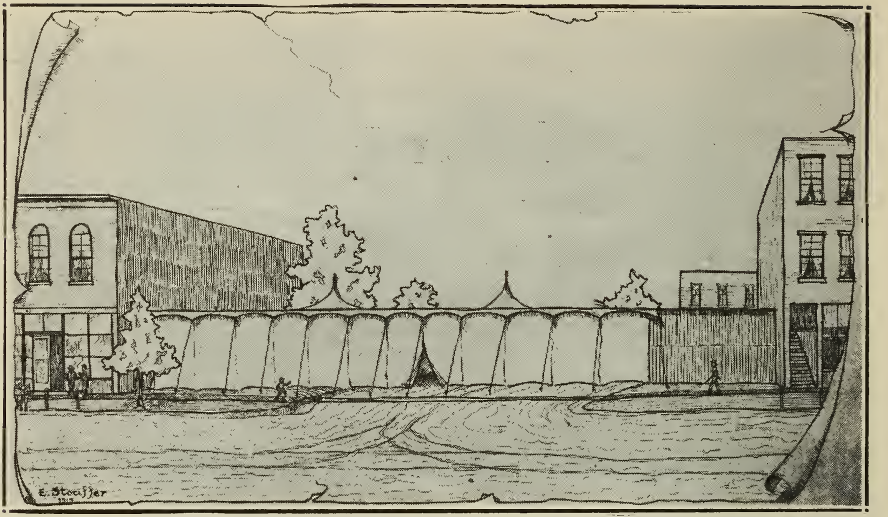
Though none of the memorable series of Lincoln-Douglas debates took place in Decatur, both Abraham Lincoln and Stephen A. Douglas made speeches in Decatur during the tense political campaigns which preceded the Civil war.

In 1860 both appeared in Powers hall. That was after the famous series of debates, and only a short time before the election. Douglas was here first and Lincoln a few days afterwards. Lincoln appeared to be utterly worn out by his hard work during the campaign, and his voice was so weak that he could hardly be heard across the hall.

Previous to this, probably in the year 1858, Lincoln spoke in Powers hall, and Douglas spoke at the furniture factory. On one occasion that year the two men had a debate in Imboden's grove, according to some of the old-time residents.

THE GREATEST OVATION

Lincoln received his greatest ovation in Macon county on May 10, 1860, when the state Republican convention was in session in the Wigwam, on State street, and his name was put forth for the first time as a candidate for the presidency. His nomination came at the national convention held a short time afterwards in Chicago.

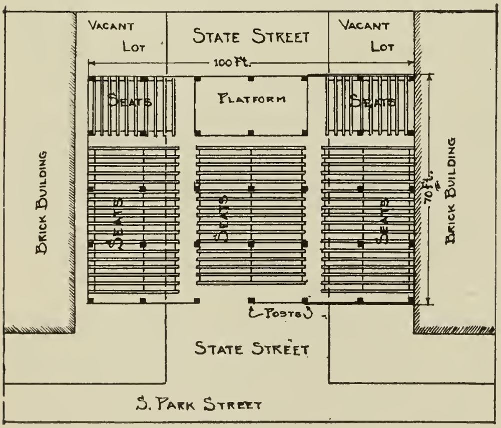


THE WIGWAM

The Wigwam was a temporary structure, with canvas roof, built especially for this convention, for Decatur had no building adequate to accommodate the crowd the convention would bring. It fronted on South Park street, and was about 100 feet by 70 feet in size. The stand was at the south side and the roof was so low that the heads of men as tall as Lincoln nearly touched it. The seats were made of planks. D. C. Shockley was the contractor who erected the building. It could accommodate 900 persons.

Republicans from all over the state assembled on that memorable day to nominate a candidate for governor, but spent most of their time in talking possible presidential candidates.

Some days before the meeting Richard J. Oglesby had conceived the idea of using some catchy expression in his plan to bring the name of Lincoln before the convention. In an effort to find something suitable, he asked John Hanks one day what kind of work "Abe used to be good at."



INTERIOR OF WIGWAM

"Not much of anything but dreaming," Hanks replied, "but he did help me once to split a lot of rails."

So Oglesby's idea of the "railsplitter" candidate was born. Together he and John Hanks went to the clearing south of Harristown where Lincoln and Hanks had split rails years before. They brought back with them two walnut rails, identified by Hanks as some of the rails the two men had made.

Oglesby's next move was to have a banner fastened to these two rails. On the banner were the words:

"Abraham Lincoln, the Railsplitter candidate for President in 1860. Two rails from a lot of 3,000 made in 1830 by John Hanks and Abe Lincoln. Whose father was the first pioneer in Macon county." (The last was untrue.)

After the convention had opened, Oglesby arose and announced that an old Democrat wanted to make a contribution to the convention.

At once every one was interested. Just then John Hanks and Isaac Jennings came in carrying the banner. The assembly went wild.

John M. Palmer jumped to his feet with a resolution declaring that Lincoln was the first choice of the Republican party in Illinois for the presidency and instructing the delegates to the Chicago convention to use all honorable means to secure the nomination, and to cast the vote of the state as a unit for him.

PANDEMONIUM

The resolution was adopted, and pandemonium reigned. Men jumped up and down in their excitement. Yells and cheers filled the air. Hats, canes, books, anything one could lay hands on, were tossed to the roof. The cheering literally raised the roof—or rather lowered it—for part of the awning fell. The Wigwam was almost a wreck.

"Lincoln," "Lincoln," the people shouted. A committee had to be sent to find him.

He was located in the Peake jewelry store lying on a couch asleep. He was rushed over to the Wigwam. Then there was another demonstration. When asked if he split those rails, Lincoln replied:

"Gentlemen, John and I did split some rails down there. I do not know if these are the identical rails or not, but I do know I have made a heap better ones and could do it again."

Thus Lincoln was started again from Macon county "on his way," this time to a larger and never-to-be-forgotten career. From henceforth, he belonged, not to any city or any county or any state, but to the nation.

HIS LAST GOODBYE

After his election as president of the United States Abraham Lincoln came through Decatur twice.

One time was on Jan. 30, 1861, when he was on his way to Charleston to visit his stepmother before he left for Washington to assume his duties as the nation's head. As they passed the vicinity of Harristown, Lincoln remarked to his companions, Judge David Davis and Judge Edmund Bates, about having made enough rails in that vicinity to fence about ten acres of ground.

"That was about thirty years ago," he said, "and it is hardly to be expected that I could identify any of the rails now."

On his way to Washington Lincoln again passed through Decatur. That was in February, 1861, and it proved to be his last visit to this city.

John Quinlan, in an interview published in The Decatur Review, Aug. 26, 1900, said, in speaking of the last time Lincoln was in Decatur:

"It was about the last of February, 1861, and Lincoln was on his way to Washington to be inaugurated. The train stopped here a few minutes. The engine was elaborately decorated. Lincoln came out and made a short speech from the platform. There were perhaps 300 or 400 people at the depot. Among them were J. R. Gorin, James Millikin, and I think Lowber Burrows and John Ullrich.

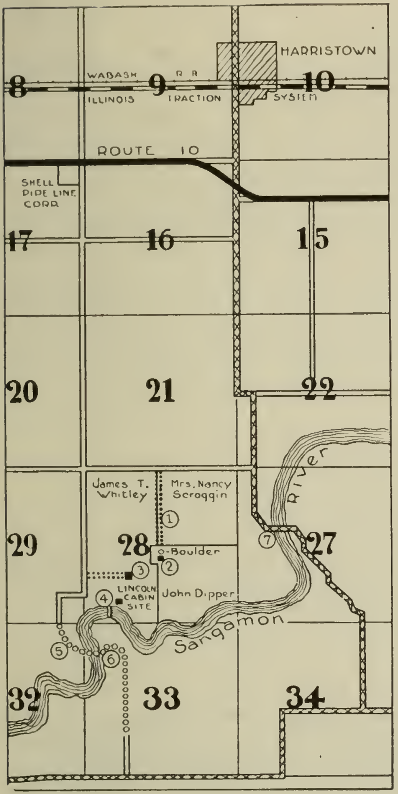
"I stood within about 15 feet of Mr. Lincoln and heard distinctly. He appeared sad and depressed and his speech had a melancholy tone. He seemed to feel that he was telling his friends goodbye with the chances against his ever returning. He even spoke of the possibilities of his never seeing his Decatur friends again. He spoke of the possible danger of his long trip to Washington. He spoke of the most eventful years of his life having been spent in Illinois and went away with the aspect of a man who was very sorry he had to go. The next time I saw him was when I attended his funeral."

LINCOLN MEMORIALS

Decatur and Macon county have marked in various ways the points of interest connected with Lincoln's life here, and have honored him in other ways.

On the West drug store building is a tablet noting the fact that Lincoln passed that way when he came to Decatur.

A boulder was placed to mark the spot near the Sangamon river in Harristown township where the Lincoln cabin stood. It is not on the exact site, however.



The map shows the roads by which the Lincoln cabin site and the boulder can be reached. The boulder which was placed by Stephen Decatur chapter, D. A. R., is about a quarter of a mile from the spot now accepted as the site. There is no road connecting those two spots.

Figures on the map show the following:

1—Private road to site of boulder.

2—Farm house on Dipper land. The boulder is four feet north of this house.

3—Farm house on Whitley land reached by private road from main road.

4—Old Whitley dam. Remains of dam still to be seen when water is low.

5—Abandoned road (once a public road).

6—Site of old ford across river, washed out years ago.

7—Bridge over Sangamon. This is the only bridge across the river in that neighborhood.

The roads marked with small squares are gravel roads.

A temporary marker now stands on the Lincoln cabin site. It is a piece of tin fastened to a post. On the tin is inscribed "Lincoln cabin site, 1830."

A marker stands on the Art Institute grounds on West Main street to show the way Lincoln traveled on the eighth judicial circuit.

On the old court house, now standing in Fairview park, is a tablet telling that Lincoln practiced law therein.

On the rear of the Millikin bank building is a tablet marking the location of the Wigwam, where Lincoln was suggested as a candidate for president. Lincoln square, Lincoln theater, Lincoln avenue, Lincoln park, Lincoln school, are all named for him.

In the public library is the Jane Hamand collection of Lincolnania which includes the Kirkham grammar from which Abraham Lincoln studied with Ann Rutledge.

CHAPTER XI

IN THE '30S AND '40S

DECATUR is a prettier, neater little village than many others of loftier pretensions through which I have passed."

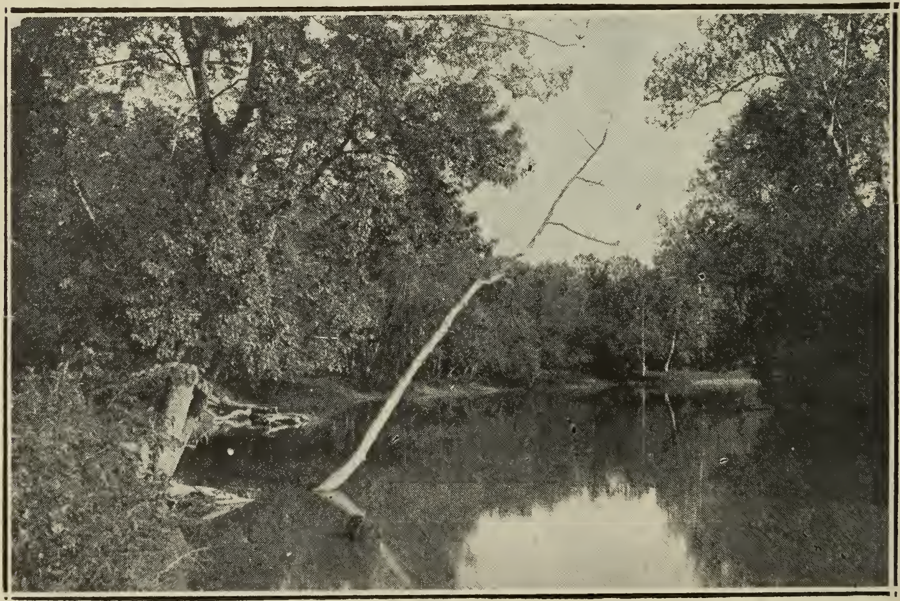
This is what Edmund Flagg wrote to the Louisville, Ky., Journal in 1836, after a trip through llinois.

He described the Sangamon as "little more than a respectable creek, with waters as clear as crystal flowing over clear, white sand." Mr. Flagg had forded the creek without trouble. He had come to Decatur on horseback from Springfield, and from here continued his journey by way of Shelbyville.

Decatur today can be proud of the fact that the city early in its career began making a good impression on its visitors.

PRAISED CEMETERY

Coming to Decatur from the west, Mr. Flagg saw the town's cemetery, and he praised communities that kept up their cities of the dead as did Decatur. The cemetery referred to was known as King's cemetery and was located on the Robinson farm land. Today its loca-



THE SANGAMON, A "RESPECTABLE CREEK"

tion would be described as West Wood street, between Oakland and Haworth avenues.

Mr. Flagg was much impressed with the many big boulders he saw on the prairies, and considered them a great mystery. Scientists agree, however, that there is no mystery about them, but that they were left by the last glacier which covered Illinois ages ago.

Even before the visit of Mr. Flagg, glowing accounts of the Illinois land and of Macon county had been printed in eastern newspapers, due particularly to the boosting propensities of one of the early landholders, Philo Hale. Though they were gross exaggerations sometimes, they doubtless had considerable influence in bringing adventurous folk from the east to help settle the new country. Mr. Hale had entered large tracts of land himself and had influenced others to come here.

CENSUS OF 1830

The Macon county census taken in 1830 showed that the total population of the county was 1,122. This census also showed that the county was provided with the following:

One cotton spinning machine.

Three horse mills.

One water mill.

Two distilleries.

The census that year was taken by Daniel McCall.

RENSHAW'S STORE

At the beginning of the 1830-1840 decade the most pretentious building in town was Renshaw's tavern and store. It boasted two stories.

This tavern was the first place in Decatur to provide accommodations for the traveler. James Renshaw, proprietor, familiarly known as "Uncle Jimmy," was a hospitable man, and his tavern was the center of village life.

Renshaw's account book, still preserved by members of the family, gives a good idea of the business activities of that day, when cash was scarce and storekeepers took articles in trade.

One of the first entries in that book shows credit given to William Hanks for 104 pounds of fresh killed pork, for which he was allowed one and one-half cents a pound.

One day Lewis Ward brought in 55 pounds of deerskin, for which he was given credit at 18 cents a pound.

Samuel McKay was credited $1.32 for seventeen pounds of beef hides.

William King brought in two bushels of mortar broken meal, and was credited 50 cents for it.

Many citizens came in to buy whisky and rum, which they had charged to their accounts. Thomas Lincoln, father of Abraham Lincoln, was a good customer for "barks" during the fall and winter of 1830.

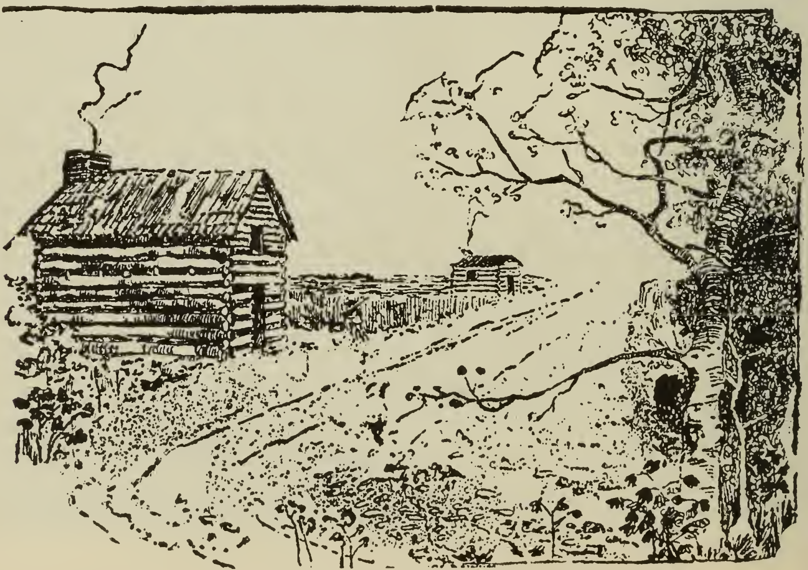
When Renshaw first started his tavern his business amounted to about $10 a day. But as the town grew, his business increased. Often he would drive cattle down to St. Louis markets, and bring back loads of merchandise for his store. He made money, and bought land. He laid out an addition to Decatur, in the northeast section.

After he retired from the tavern business he lived in a log cabin at the corner of Condit and Broadway streets until he built a brick home there. Mr. Renshaw died in 1860.

There was another store in Decatur as early as 1831. It was run by Isaac C. Pugh, who afterwards became one of Decatur's most noted generals.

John Ward ran a store at Indian Bluff on the Sangamon, south of Decatur, and there he carried a stock of groceries and some dry goods. The store was particularly for the benefit of the Ward settlement.

Tea, sugar and coffee were very high in that day and were little used, as they were regarded as luxuries. There were substitutes, however. The early citizens used maple sugar, wild honey and mo-



WATER STREET IN 1833

lasses for sweetening. Sassafras tea, sage tea, and mint tea were popular beverages, and parched rye, barley and other grains did for coffee.

QUIET AND PICTURESQUE

One has to rely on one's imagination to picture Decatur as it was in the early 30s. One early writer has said that in the spring of 1834 Decatur had eleven buildings; seven were dwellings, two store buildings, one a court house and one a jail. A cluster of log cabins, mostly in timber, it must have been a picturesque, quiet retreat. Streets, as laid out in the town plat, were scarcely discernible as yet for the cabins were few and scattered.

Among the pioneers who called Decatur their home then were James Renshaw, the tavernkeeper mentioned before; William Cantrill, storekeeper; Landy Harrell, who became a tavern keeper; Daniel McCall, county official; James Johnson, the village blacksmith; Philip Williams, justice of the peace; Thomas Cowan, the village carpenter, William Glasscock, storekeeper. Every man had his place in the village life.

Some of the settlers residing near town then were William and John Hanks, Isaac C. Pugh, Amos Robinson, Elisha Freeman, Buel Stevens, John Lee, David Owen, Ben Frazee, David Miller, Parmenius Smallwood, Joseph Davis, David Allen, William Warnick. and James Ward.

Here the pioneers lived in their humble, yet comfortable log huts, in the midst of trees and flowers and brooks.

Isaac Pugh's store, according to report, was on West Main street. One writer, however, says that he had a store for a short time in a log cabin which stood on the spot now occupied by the north end of Central block. In the year 1832 William Glasscock sold goods in that cabin, but afterwards moved his store.

CANTRILL'S STORE

In the summer of 1832 Bell and Tinsley of Springfield sent a stock of goods which were put in the room formerly occupied by Mr. Renshaw. A youth named Hawley was sent along as clerk, but he soon became tired of living "in the sticks," and returned to Springfield. When William Cantrill first came to Decatur in 1833 he came as a clerk for that same firm.

The store which Cantrill opened with his stock from Springfield was Decatur's first real general merchandise store.[1] It was located in a log structure at the southeast corner of East Main street and the public square, the site now occupied by the West drug store.

In this building Mr. Cantrill served as postmaster in 1835 and 1836, stowing the letters away in a small box in a corner. Sometimes he carried them in his hat. Mail was a luxury then, and the postmaster's job didn't call for any over-work on his part. The population of the town then was little more than a hundred. Before coming to Decatur Mr. Cantrill had served in the Black Hawk war, being a second lieutenant in Captain Levi Goodan's company. Mr. Cantrill afterwards became county treasurer and was a member of the state legislature.

Another of Decatur's early stores was run by the Dewees brothers. They occupied a brick building on South Main street which was the first brick house in the town. John Miller made the brick for the house.

The Dewees brothers were brick masons themselves and did some brick work. The first brick yard was located south of Fairview park. The old jail at Wood and Church streets was built of Decatur-made brick but it was said that it "could be picked to pieces with a darning needle." Evidently the brick made at that time was not very satisfactory.

In 1835 Benjamin R. Austin took the census. The county's population then was 3,022. In 1840, when S. G. Nesbitt took the census, the population was 3,233.

SOCIAL LIFE

Young folks of the '30s and '40s had their gay times, as young folks always have. One of the belles of that day, Jane Williams, later Mrs. Watt Culver, saved invitations to parties she attended. Only recently those relics which have been kept in her family were turned over to the Art Institute. They tell of parties and balls at the Central house, the Decatur house, and at homes. Parties in those days began at 3 or 4 o'clock in the afternoon.

SOME EXCITEMENT

There were often wild times in those days, also. Whisky drinking was common, and as a result fights were frequent. For some time Tom Johnson ran a "barrel house" in a brick building south of the square. When a man wanted a drink he went to the barrel and drew what he wanted, in the tin cup. A drink then cost a picayune (about 6¼ cents). Much of the small change in use then was Spanish coins.

During the political campaigns of 1840 and 1844 times were exciting. For a meeting hall the second floor of the old brick building, which occupied the present site of the Bachrach store, was used in 1840 by the Harrison club. A barrel of cider was always on tap, and in that room politicians held forth. Enthusiasm stirred up at the meetings there added life and zest to the village. Both Lincoln and Douglas spoke in that hall, according to B. H. Cassell.

Other prominent politicians who spoke in Decatur in those early day campaigns were W. F. Linder of Charleston, O. B. Ficklin and Colonel Ed Baker of Springfield, David Davis of Bloomington, and Kirby Benedict of Decatur.

EARLY DAY FUNERALS

Death often visited the homes in those days. Malaria, the dreaded disease, took a big toll. There were more burial grounds around Decatur then than now, though they were not such extensive ones. B. H. Cassell used to say, in telling of the funerals of early times:

"There was none of the ceremony that now marks a funeral. When anyone died the men friends offered their services to dig a grave. We would dig down about six feet and then at the bottom dig out a receptacle just the shape and size of the coffin.

"The cabinet makers would make the coffins. They were shaped so they were wide where the shoulders lay and tapered toward the ends and were made of light walnut three-quarters of an inch thick, and sometimes would be varnished or polished. The coffins cost $10 to $12 each.

"Sometimes there would be a minister to conduct services, but there were no flowers or elaborate ceremonies. It was impossible to have anything of the kind for the reason that the houses were too small. If a preacher did not conduct services, perhaps some one would make a few remarks, and sometimes nothing would be said. A horse and wagon would be procured from the man who carried the mail and the coffin would be put in this and conveyed to the burying ground and the few attendants would follow on foot."

The earliest burial grounds long ago ceased to exist. Once there was a burial ground at the corner of Eldorado and Franklin streets. Another was near the intersection of the Wabash tracks and North Main street. On West Main street, on East Wood street, and on East Clay street there were graveyards. All of these, and others also, were smoothed over when streets were laid out.

AN EARLY DAY WEDDING

Ben Frazee almost ran Old Louisiana to death when he went about the country inviting guests to the wedding of his sister, Sarah, to William H. Henson, along in the late '40s. But all the neighbors had to be invited, and it was up to Ben to see that they got word of the big event that was coming off. So he mounted his trusty steed and set forth.

A hundred folks were present for the wedding supper. Ben Frazee knew, for he counted them. The wedding ceremony had proceeded all O. K., Justice James Harrell officiating, the supper was a grand spread, and everything was lovely until it began to rain.

The rain, it appeared, cared not for weddings and wedding guests. It came to stay a while, and couldn't be persuaded to go away. It just kept on raining. The next morning, after the wedding, it was still raining. Sixty of the wedding guests were still there, for they hadn't been able to get away to their homes. It was quite some time before the party had all departed.

They had three kinds of bread at that wedding supper, undercrust, overcrust, and crumb. The bread was baked by a neighbor, Mrs. Rife. It took a lot of pumpkin pie to go around, but there was plenty.

Mrs. Henson had been born in Claremont county, Ohio, Sept. 27, 1830, and had come to Illinois when just a year old, her parents making the trip in a prairie schooner. They lived first at what afterwards was numbered 1834 East William street, moving out to the country later.[2] Her husband entered forty acres in Harristown township and built a home there. From 1849 until her death at the age of 93 she lived on that farm. Mr. Henson added to his land holdings from time to time until at the time of his death he had several hundred acres.

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[1] After selling out his store Uncle Billy Cantrill lived on a farm near town for a year, then moved back to Decatur and made his home on North Main street, between Prairie and William. He died in 1881. Cantrell street is named for him though it is spelled differently from the way Mr. Cantrill spelled his name.

Uncle Billy was about the most popular man in the county for a long time. While an office holder, Uncle Billy looked from his window in the court house down over the hitching yards—that is, the old square where farmers always hitched their horses when they came to town.

As soon as Uncle Billy saw a farmer drive in and tie his team, out he darted to the square to shake hands with the newcomer, ask him how he was getting along in the world, and inquire about other members of the family. Then Uncle Billy proceeded to help unhitch the horses. He did that so much that he became an expert at unhitching. It was said that he could unhitch horses faster than anybody in the country around.

Whenever he chose to run for office in those days nobody was able to beat him. He served on the town board of trustees, and was the thirteenth county treasurer, serving four years.

Mr. Cantrill was a Democrat, politically. That was before the days that Macon county became heavily Republican.

[2] Ben Frazee, who was born in Decatur in 1834, used to say that when he wanted spending money he used to gather up a couple dozen goose quills and sell them to Captain Allen for ten cents.

Another way he made money was to trap quail and sell them to Kirby Benedict for 37½ cents a dozen.

He also used to catch and clean rabbits and sell them to George Gepford for 5 cents each. Gepford would take them to Chicago with his poultry just before the holidays.

CHAPTER XII

INTERNAL IMPROVEMENTS

MACON county had no conspicuous part in the scheme for internal improvements authorized by the Illinois legislature in the year 1836, the story of which is a dark chapter in the history of the state. The county was then too young to have any influence in state politics.

Macon county suffered, however, in a general way by the collapse of the project just as the entire state did. It received one benefit at least from the proposed improvement program, and that was a lot of publicity.

Decatur, being the intersection of two railroads planned at that time, came in for considerable favorable mention. That publicity was all it did get, however, for the roads never materialized, and the only short stretch of railroad that was built was eighty miles away from Decatur.

The era of internal improvements, as it is called, began in 1835 at the beginning of Governor Joseph Duncan's administration. In his first message to the legislature he pleaded for a general system of internal improvements.

The people of Illinois were ready to welcome such a proposal. The state had been growing in population. Farm production was increasing and the need of transportation facilities was being realized more and more all the time. The governor's scheme for railroads and river improvements struck a responsive chord. Everybody wanted something; some sections asked for railroads, some for canals, some for improvement of rivers to make them navigable.

IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

The legislature in extraordinary session Jan. 9, 1836, authorized the building of the Illinois-Michigan canal.

The same year a $10,230,000 improvement program was passed. Abraham Lincoln was one of the members of the legislature who supported that bill. It called for improvement of the Great Wabash, Illinois, Rock, Kaskaskia and Little Wabash rivers, building of the Great Western mail route, construction of the Central railroad from the mouth of the Ohio to Galena, and of the Northern Cross and the Southern Cross railroads.

The passage of the bill started a fever of excitement and speculation. New towns were laid out along the proposed railroads. For a while, said one writer, the chief export of Illinois was town plats. These plats were sent to Chicago and to the east in order to be within reach of eager purchasers of lots who were unable personally to see the town sites. The towns, however, never went any farther than the paper on which they were laid out.

Work on railroads was started at different points over the state, and money was spent recklessly. It was discovered that the estimates for the work had not been large enough by half. The construction of the Illinois-Michigan canal had already been a heavy draft on the resources of the state. The credit of Illinois became strained. Financial panic came on. Banks failed.

The legislature did not repeal the public improvement act, but continued to borrow money. The state debt finally reached $13,643,601.

Governor Duncan had been succeeded by Thomas Carlin in 1838, but there was no improvement in the situation during his regime. Then in December, 1842, Thomas Ford became governor. Out of the chaos he brought order.

When Ford came into office he faced a bankrupt treasury, a huge debt hanging over the state, and the people themselves in debt and unable to pay higher taxes.

ABANDON PROGRAM

Illinois had various detached beginnings of railroads, but none completed. Only the short stretch of the Northern Cross road between Meredosia and Jacksonville had been finished. It was the only thing to show for the few amazing years of money spending. At a special session of the legislature called by the new governor the public improvement program was practically abandoned.

The Northern Cross road was expected to be run from Quincy to Danville and the state line. The appropriation which had been made for this road was $1,850,000. Though Macon county did not get any of the road at the time the project was started, it had the comfort of being on the proposed route, and hopes of seeing the road built some day. It had to wait nearly twenty years longer for that hope to be realized.

SERVICE INAUGURATED

After the completion of the first section of the Northern Cross road, a locomotive was brought from the east and service was inaugurated on the road Nov. 8, 1838. The first engine was called the

"Rogers." Following the collapse of the internal improvement program, the line was extended by private capital to Springfield, in 1842, the line being known as the Morgan and Sangamon.

At first three trips each week were made from Springfield to the Illinois river, the speed of the cars being six miles an hour. This was considered a wonderful achievement!

The track was made by nailing flat pieces of iron on timbers. It was not long until the road became so rough and uneven and the engine so much out of repair that mules were substituted for the engine to draw the cars. This service finally became too poor to be endured longer, and the line was sold in 1847, at public auction.

The Great Western railroad, which came into possession of this first feeble attempt at a railroad, had been incorporated on March 6, 1843. After taking over the Northern Cross, it completed the building of the line. The first three locomotives used on the road were called the Morgan, Sangamon and Frontier.

The Great Western afterwards became part of the Toledo, Wabash and Western, which eventually became the Wabash.

CHAPTER XIII

DAVID L. ALLEN

"THERE should be a place in the city where mothers and their children might rest out of the sun and where the children could play," said Captain David L. Allen one day. He was thinking often of the children just then, for his thoughts had been on his own little baby boy—his only son—who had been snatched from him by death.

And so, because Captain Allen was a man who believed in doing things rather than merely thinking them, Decatur has a place today where "mothers may rest and children may play," the place we call Central park, which was given to the city by Captain Allen.

GENEROUS GIVER

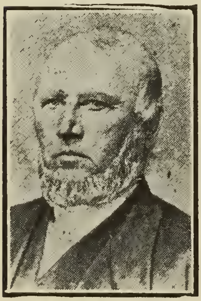
It was like Captain Allen to be doing something for Decatur. At the time the Illinois Central and Northern Cross railroads first were proposed, and preliminary surveys made, he offered the tract now Central park as a site for a railroad station. The railroad project failing at that time, Captain Allen later donated the square to Decatur for use as a park.

Again he made a gift to the city when he donated a lot at the corner of North Water and North Park streets, the present site of the Citizens bank, for school purposes.

Once more his generosity was shown when he donated a lot to the Antioch Baptist church, on which to erect a church building. He also offered a lot to St. Peter's A. M. E. church.

Had Captain Allen not been so generous, he might have died a rich man. Yet when his time came to go, he was almost poor. But his memory has remained, and as long as county histories are written he will be honored as one who did more than his share for the upbuilding of the town and community. This is worth more than the riches he might have left.

David L. Allen made a good impression when he first arrived in Decatur, away back in 1828. He drove the best looking carriage that had been seen in this neighborhood. He had $1600 in cash in his pockets. That was a lot of money then.



CAPTAIN DAVID L. ALLEN

If he had come without carriage or money, however, he would have made the same good impression, for he was a man of charming personality. People soon realized that when David L. Allen came he brought with him all the charm and hospitality of old Virginia, his native state.

For years his home was the center of social, intellectual and religious life. The uplifting influence of that home, and also the home of his brother-in-law, Dr. Thomas H. Read, was recognized by every early resident of Decatur.

Captain Allen was born in Loudoun county, Va., March 14, 1806, coming of Scotch-Irish descent. In 1828, after he had sold the family plantation in Virginia, he purchased a team of horses and a carriage, and started for Illinois. He came with the idea of investing his money in land. He liked Decatur and he liked the surrounding country. From the time he came until the time he died he was a booster, and his boosting was in deeds, not words.

Captain Allen entered an eighty acre tract of land, which is now the heart of Decatur. It was bounded on the west by Water street and extended about a quarter of a mile east. The northern line was about where the Wabash tracks are located, and the southern boundary was East Wood street.

BUILT HOME

At the time he entered this tract of land an old log cabin stood on it, on North Water street, in what is now the 400 block. To this Mr. Allen made additions until he finally had one of the best homes in the city. The building of the main part of the house was done in 1837 by E. O. Smith, and this was Mr. Smith's first building job in Decatur. It was in this house that the First Baptist church, of which Captain Allen was a charter and a life-long member, was organized in 1843.

In 1830 Captain Allen brought his bride to Decatur. She was, before her marriage, Miss Julia Read of Rutherford county, Tenn. Their journey from Tennessee to Decatur was made on horseback. As they were saying good-bye to Mrs. Allen's old home, her brother broke off a twig from a weeping willow tree which stood by their well and handed it to her to use for a riding whip. Mrs. Allen stuck the twig in the ground

ALLEN HOME ON NORTH WATER STREET

near the well at her new home in Decatur, and it flourished until it became a big tree. Under this tree Mrs. Allen often entertained her friends.

Captain Allen built the second water mill in the county, in 1831-32, and made a dam across the river. The mill was at the foot of what is now Maffit street. It was sold later to Robert Maffit and for years was known as Maffit's mill. On the south side of the river he had a lime kiln, which he ran for a number of years. This lime kiln was really Decatur's first industry.

FED DEER

Captain Allen's hospitality was not confined to human beings but extended to animals, as was shown during the winter of the deep snow. He had established a cattle feeding pen on East North street, and during that hard winter the deer came from all directions to that pen for food. Captain Allen saw to it that they were fed.

The Macon house, Decatur's first hotel, was built by Captain Allen at the corner of East Prairie and Franklin streets, in 1839, the construction work being done by E. O. Smith. At the time the building was erected it stood in the midst of heavy timber.

It was in 1856 that Captain Allen donated the lot at the corner of North Park and North Water streets to the city to be used for school purposes. This lot was later sold to the Masons.

COUNTRY HOME

Captain Allen was a man of vision. He thought the time would come when men of wealth would establish their country homes on the south side of the river. He saw beautiful country estates such as he had been accustomed to see back in Virginia. But they never materialized.

To provide such an estate for himself Captain Allen purchased over seventy acres of land south of the river, land which he admired for its beauty. It was then, and has remained, probably the most beautiful tract of land along the Sangamon.

Natural springs, called by the Indians "sweet water springs"; hills and ravines, carpeted with wild flowers in the springtime; tall trees making their dense shade in the summer and furnishing a riot of color in the autumn; vines and shrubs and grassy open places—these were the beauties which Captain Allen saw in the land which he visioned as his own country home.

On the bluff at the bend of the river, known for years as Allen's bend, Captain Allen erected an imposing structure which later became his home. He had intended to build a more pretentious home later, using the first structure then as a barn, but that plan he was never able to carry out.

This building stood for many years as one of the landmarks of the country. Standing on the hilltop, with its eight-sided tower rearing itself to a height of three stories, it never failed to attract attention. The building stood west of the present site of Mueller lodge. In this house Captain Allen spent the later years of his life and there he continued to lavish the hospitality for which he was known. In this house he passed away in 1884. His body lies buried in Greenwood cemetery.

The easy going ways of the Virginian did not fit in well with pioneer times in Illinois in a business way. Carelessness in business affairs caused him to lose much of his material goods. Yet one forgets such a fault in remembering his geniality, his generosity, his friendliness, his bettering influence, his hospitality, and the large part he played in the upbuilding of Decatur.

CHAPTER XIV

THE FIRST CHURCHES

MACON county was more fortunate in one respect than many others of the early day counties. The early settlers as a rule were of a high class of people. Many of them were law-abiding citizens of Scotch-Irish stock and brought with them to their new home their strong religious convictions. The strongest churches in the county today are monuments to the men and women who established them nearly a hundred years ago.

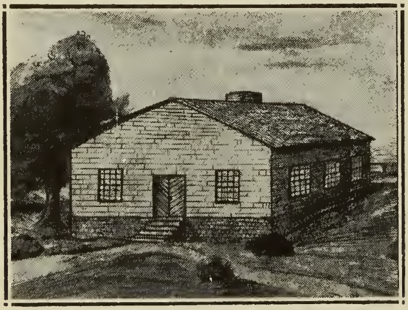
The first religious services were held in homes, as a matter of necessity. Occasionally a preacher would drop into the neighborhood and then a sermon could be heard, but more often the worship consisted of prayer, song and testimony. Services could not be held regularly because of bad roads. In summer the big events were the camp meetings.

METHODISTS ORGANIZE

In the Stevens creek settlement were a number of adherents to the Methodist faith. That fact came to the attention of Rev. Peter Cartwright, militant leader of Methodism in Illinois, who was the presiding elder of the Sangamon district. In the fall of 1829 he started the first Methodist "society" in Macon county.

The meeting for organization was held in the home of David Owen, on the west side of Stevens creek. The following persons were present: Buel Stevens and wife, Luther Stevens and wife, Dorus Stevens, Joseph Stevens, Mr. Hollenbeck, David Owen and wife, and John Frazee and wife. The new society became a part of the Salt Creek circuit, of which Rev. W. L. Deneen was named pastor.

The next year there were several additions to the society from the families of Jonathan and Isaac Miller; also Rev. Alonzo Lapham and wife, Margaret, and Dr. William T. Crissey and wife Margaret, who had come here from Edgar county. In the fall of 1831 the preaching service was moved in to Decatur.


FIRST METHODIST CHURCH BUILDING

Rev. William S. Crissey of Paoli Circuit, Ind., had come to Decatur in the spring of 1831 to visit his uncle, Dr. William T. Crissey, and he preached for the Methodists in Decatur and also in the Stevens Creek settlement while here. He came back in the fall of 1831 and again preached for them, after the services had been established in Decatur. Mr. Crissey moved to Decatur in 1839 to make his home here, and for years was an active church leader.

By 1834 the Methodists had decided they needed a church building and one was started, but it was not finally completed until 1839. The church stood in a dense hazel thicket on the east side of Church street, between Main and Prairie streets.

James Renshaw donated the lot for the building. The structure was of hewn oak logs, and was 38 by 40 feet in size. Slabs and benches were used for seats. There were two rows of seats, the men occupying those on one side of the building and the women those on the other side. Candles furnished the light.

In May, 1839, in a town meeting trustees for the church were elected. Following is an extract from a court record, Book H, Page 188:

"According to previous notice the inhabitants of Decatur were convened on the 31st of May, 1839, to appoint trustees for the Methodist Episcopal church in said town, when the following persons were elected, to-wit: Buel Stevens, Luther Stevens, F. Montgomery, William Greenfield, J. M. Fordice, Daniel Stickle and A. Lapham, who shall hold the office during life, unless they move away or resign, according to the discipline of said church, which said trustees assume the name of the First Methodist Episcopal church of Decatur.

"In testimony whereof we have hereunto subscribed and set our hands and seals this 31st day of May, 1839.

"A. Lapham	J. M. Fordice
F. Montgomery	Daniel Stickle
Luther Stevens	William Greenfield."

The log building was used by this congregation until a new church was erected in 1854, at the corner of Water and Prairie streets[1].

BLUE MOUND SOCIETY

Another early Methodist society organized was the Blue Mound society, started probably late in 1829 or early in 1830, and also in charge of Rev. W. L. Deneen. It was organized at the home of Benjamin Wilson. Rev. H. A. Pasley moved from Kentucky here in 1834 and became the Sunday school superintendent. He was the third local preacher in this locality.

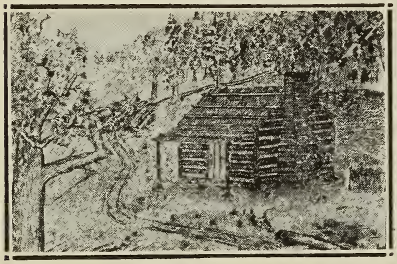
The Long Creek Methodist society was started in the '30s. Official records show the first minister was appointed in 1838.

The Mt. Gilead society was formed about 1836 or 1837, and held services for many years in the log school house near John Wilson's.

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

The first sermon by a minister of the Presbyterian faith in Macon county was preached by Rev. John Berry in a log school house three and one-half miles southwest of Decatur, on a farm which for many years was owned by P. M. Wikoff.

The first church organized was the Mt. Zion Cumberland Presbyterian church, which had its beginning April 24, 1830. The meeting was held at the home of the preacher, Rev. David L. Foster, three miles north of the present village. Rev. David L. Foster organized the first Sunday school in the county at this church in 1831. James Scott was the first superintendent.


HOME OF REV. DAVID L. FOSTER
Log cabin in which C. P. church at Mt. Zion was organized.

The first house of worship erected by this congregation was the first church building in the county. It stood on the lot where the Mt. Zion church stands today. It was of logs, and was about 30 feet square. The only floor was the earth. Seats were of slabs. This building had one luxury—the windows were of glass.

For a year the church was without a pastor, and made no progress. Then Rev. N. Johnson preached for the church for a time.

Rev. Daniel Traughber of the Kentucky presbytery settled in the community in November, 1836, and preached for the congregation. In June, 1837, he was appointed as the pastor, continuing in that capacity for twenty-five years. Other Presbyterian churches which are the outgrowth of this organization are the Bethlehem, North Fork and Madison churches.

CHRISTIAN CHURCH

REV. JOHN W. TYLER

The Christian church had its start in Macon county in 1833 with a protracted meeting conducted by Rev. Joseph Hostetler, which resulted in the organization of a church in 1834. The members used the log court house for their service until they erected a building in 1835. The new church stood on the present site of the Hotel Orlando. It was on a tract of two acres of ground which was donated by Mr. Hostetler. This building, also of logs, was about 20 feet square.[2] It was used by the congregation for about twenty years. Among the early members of this church were "Aunt Judy" Oglesby and Dr. J. G. Speer. In 1836 Rev. John W. Tyler and his wife came.[3] They, with Mr. Hostetler, are credited with the progress of the church in the early days.

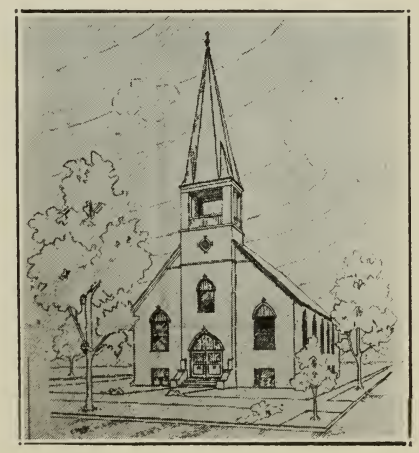
BAPTIST CHURCH

The Baptist church had its beginnings in the county Sept. 14, 1843, when a meeting was held in the home of Captain David L. Allen, and a church was organized with twelve charter members. Elder H. W. Dodge was in charge of the organization. Members conducted the meetings the first year. In 1844 Elder Moses Lenion was named pastor, but he stayed only six months. The first building erected by this congregation was at the northeast corner of Water and William streets and it was dedicated Dec. 27, 1857.

The Salem Separate Baptist church, five miles southwest of Decatur, was organized in 1846 with nine charter members. It flourished for a time but later disbanded. The cemetery nearby this church is probably the oldest in the county. It was started about 1829 or 1830.

UNITED BRETHREN

The United Brethren church began its work in the county in 1848 with preaching services by Rev. James Parks. They were held at the home of Rev. M. T. Chew, five miles southwest of Decatur, who became the first pastor. There was



FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH BUILDING

no regular church organization at this time. The neighborhood contained only three families and often only two or three persons could attend the meetings. It was not until about eight years later that a church of this denomination was organized in Decatur.

Most of the other denominations now represented in the county started work in the '50s or later.

MEN OF ENDURANCE

The preachers of the early day were men of endurance. It must be said that their hearers had to be persons of endurance also, for the preacher of that day did not stop at a twenty-minute discourse. He talked as long as he had anything to say, and he usually had a good deal to say. Maybe the people needed a long sermon to last them until the next chance to hear one.

Preachers were bold and fearless in what they said. They did not mince words.

The circuit rider had to be a man of courage. Peter Cartwright was a fighter as well as leader. He met men and nature without fear, and if occasion demanded it he could fight with fists or weapons. For forty-four years he rode a circuit of 300 miles, his salary being $80 a year "when and if he could collect it."

It took men like Peter Cartwright and his contemporaries to make the church what it was in those days, an influence that has lasted down to the present day.

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[1] The old Methodist first church building was used for years as a carpenter and wagon making shop after the new building was erected. In 1862 it was rented to the Hospital Aid society and one time about forty refugees from the south were housed in it for several months.

[2] The old Christian church building on Wood street was used afterwards by Samuel Powers as a breeding stable for fine horses.

[3] Mrs. Sue T. Odor, daughter of John W. Tyler, had the honor of having the record in years of membership in the Christian church in Decatur. She united with the church in 1856 and continued active until her death in 1930.

CHAPTER XV

FIRST PHYSICIANS

RIDING over prairies in the murky darkness, up hills and down hollows, through mud in which his horse often became mired, the howling of wolves the only sound to be heard, no signs of human habitation for miles and miles—the physician of the early day was a man not to be envied. Often his only reward was the knowledge that he had brought relief to the suffering child, or eased the pain of its elder.

Those first physicians in Macon county had wide territories to cover, and many are the tales that could be related of their hardships. It was nothing unusual to be called twenty or thirty miles to see a patient. There was no automobile to whiz him there in a few moments. It meant a long, weary horseback ride before he could reach his destination. When he left his home he never knew when he would be back. He might be stopped often along the way, and it might be days before he could return to his own fireside.

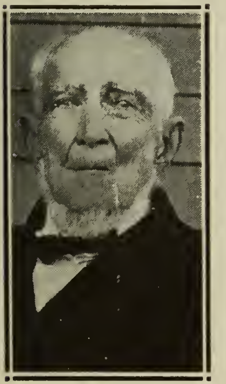
FIRST DOCTOR

According to records, Dr. William T. Crissey was the first doctor to settle in Macon county. He came here from Edgar county, Ill., in 1829 or 1830. Dr. Crissey was a member of the first board of trustees of the town of Decatur, elected in 1836, and served again in that office in 1839. In the spring of 1831 Dr. Crissey was visited by his nephew, Rev. William S. Crissey, of Indiana, who later settled here also and became a leader in Methodist church activities.

DR. JOHN G. SPEER

Dr. John Grove Speer, another of Decatur's first physicians, was the first man to open a drug store in the town. He had come to Illinois from Kentucky in 1831. It was while he and his wife were making the journey to Macon county that their first child was born, in October, 1831, at the home of Nathaniel Wayne, on the Little Ambraw river.

Dr. Speer was born in Burke county, N. C., Feb. 12, 1809, the same day Abraham Lincoln came into the world. His family moved to Old-


DR. JOHN G. SPEER

ham county, Ky., in 1811. There Dr. Speer grew up and received his schooling. He studied medicine with Dr. Hiram Barton Weathers of Floydsburg, Ky., and attended medical college in Lexington. He married Sarah Eddings Snyder Nov. 11, 1830.[1]

His father-in-law, Harry Snyder, had decided to locate in Macon county. Snyder's son, Albert G. Snyder, was here in the spring of 1831 as surveyor with a party of four Kentuckians. They all entered land on the east side of the Little Okaw river, about twenty miles southeast of Decatur. There they built homes.

When the Snyder families came, the Speers were persuaded to come with them. They stopped for the winter of 1831 at the Okaw settlement, then in the spring settled at Cross Roads, south of Decatur. Dr. Speer moved in to Decatur in 1833, remaining about a year. Then he moved back to the country, but later went to Manchester in Morgan county, where he built up a good practice. In the fall of 1837 he returned to Decatur.

Dr. Speer's drug store, which was the first in Decatur, was located on the old square. Dr. Speer was appointed postmaster May 27, 1837, and served until Feb. 19, 1840. During the summer and fall of 1837 there was a great deal of sickness and Drs. Crissey, Speer and Read were kept extremely busy.

One year Dr. Speer was a candidate for the legislature, but was defeated by a few votes, his defeat being due, it was said, to the fact that he would not consent to cut up Macon county in order to form a new county. In 1843 he was elected probate judge, but resigned the third year as the work interfered with his medical practice.

Dr. Speer remained in Decatur until 1847, but his last years here were full of trouble. He had been induced to build a two-story house on his lot in the northeast corner of the public square to be used as a hotel. In this enterprise he was joined by Landy Harrell, who was to conduct the hotel. Harrell withdrew, however, selling out his interest to Speer. It was a bad venture for Speer and almost ruined him financially. Times were extremely hard, interest rates were high, people couldn't pay their bills, many were bankrupt. Dr. Speer moved his store into the main floor of the house he had built and lived there several years. There was illness and death in his family, and finally he decided to go back to Alton, Ky. He transferred the building he had erected to his father-in-law who had endorsed him, and returned in 1847 to Kentucky where he lived to be more than 100 years old.

Dr. Speer had a remarkable memory, and when he was ninety-one years old he wrote and published a book giving details of the

Snyder and Speer families. The story told in the book gives the details of the time when the families resided in this county.

DR. THOMAS H. READ

Dr. Thomas H. Read was another early physician, who located in Decatur in 1831. He was a brother-in-law of Captain David L. Allen, Mrs. Allen being his sister, and he lived with the Allens when he first came here. Later, in 1836, he married Elizabeth Allen, sister of Captain Allen. Dr. Read came from Virginia, as did the Allens.

Dr. Read became known particularly for his success in treating children, and was considered the best physician available in cases of cholera infantum. He had a reputation for honesty and truth, and it was said he was administrator of more estates than anyone else in the county.

In politics Dr. Read was a strong Democrat. He was a man of vigorous expression. He was active in civic affairs, and served on the town board of trustees in 1839 and 1846. From 1846 to 1849 he filled the office of probate judge. He was elected county treasurer in 1845, but resigned the office early in 1846. Dr. Read built a handsome brick residence at the corner of Franklin and North streets, where the high school now stands. His home was a center for social and cultural life.

Among other early physicians, some of whom did not stay long, were Drs. Reddick, Banes and Rodgers. Dr. Speer mentions the death of Dr. Reddick about 1837. Dr. Banes returned to Tennessee after a year's stay in Decatur.

DR. JOSEPH KING

Dr. Joseph King, who became one of Decatur's most widely known physicians, came in 1837. He had been born in West Virginia, Dec. 30, 1808, and grew to manhood there and in Ohio. He was educated for the medical profession at Cincinnati.

Dr. King and Marietta Packard were married Dec. 8, 1842, Mrs. King being the daughter of Silas and Lydia Packard. The house which he built at the northeast corner of Edward and Marietta streets was a landmark for years both because of its size and because of the apple orchard nearby. This orchard was known as King's Orchard. In a day when Decatur had few recreation spots, this orchard took the place of a park for that section of the city.

Dr. King came to have an extensive practice, and won a reputation particularly as an obstetrician. His ability as a diagnostician also was widely recognized. He was interested in fraternal orders, and was one of the founders of Macon lodge, No. 8, A. F. and A. M. and Macon Chapter, No. 21. He also was a charter member of the I. O. O. F. His love for dogs and sympathy for all animal life and his fondness for fishing are remembered.[2] Dr. King died in 1893 and Mrs. King in 1918.

Their names are perpetuated in the King, Marietta and Packard streets we have today.

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[1] Susan McGovern, a little girl adopted by the Speers, afterwards became Mrs. Edmund Packard, and still later became Mrs. J. P. Boyd. She lived to be more than ninety-six years old and was one of Decatur's interesting old residents.

[2] The story is told that Dr. King one cold stormy night could not bear to think of the chickens freezing outside, and he went out and carried them into the house where they could be thawed out by the fireplace. They really had to be thawed out, for their mouths and legs were covered with ice.

CHAPTER XVI

NOMENCLATURE

ORIGIN of names of rivers, states, counties, townships, cities and villages in a new country makes a study of absorbing interest. Incidentally, these names tell much about a country's history.

In the Mississippi Valley can be found traces of the influence of all the people who once claimed the land, Indian, French, English, American, even Spanish, though there is less of the latter than of any other. In our own county there is practically no trace of the French.

Illinois, Mississippi, Chicago, Peoria, Wabash, are among names that can be ascribed to the Indians.

Joliet, LaSalle, Marquette, Hennepin, Des Plaines took their names from the French.

Macon and Decatur were named for Americans.

ILLINOIS

The name Illinois is generally ascribed to the Indian term, Illini, or Innini, meaning "men."[1] Yet there is another rumor about the naming of Illinois. It is believed by some students of history to have come from "Isle au Noix," meaning "Island of Nuts." It is everywhere known that when the French explored the country they were much impressed by the fertility of the soil, the produce, the bountiful crops of grapes, nuts, and the like. As the Illinois region was almost surrounded by rivers, the Mississippi, the Ohio, the Wabash, the Illinois, and by Lake Michigan, it is not unreasonable to think that they would call the region the Isle au Noix. The pronunciation of these words in French is similar to our pronunciation of Illinois.

SANGAMON

Sangamon was thought by some writers to have been the name of an Indian chief who lived along the river named for him. It is supposed to have been a Kickapoo Indian word, meaning land of plenty. Others think it is the English corruption of St. Gamoin, a name that appears in land records at the court house in connection with locating the boundaries of Whitmore township. St. Gamoin is the name used by the first surveyors of this vicinity. The name is used often enough to make one believe that it was written that way intentionally and was not an error in transcribing.

STEPHEN DECATUR

Decatur was named for Stephen Decatur, the brilliant young United States naval commander, who was distinguished particularly for his success and bravery in this country's troubles with Tripoli, in protection of American commerce on the Mediterranean. His most brilliant exploit was the capture of the Philadelphia, U. S. man-of-war, in the harbor of Tripoli, after the Tripolitans had manned it. Decatur drove the enemy off the boat into the sea, set the ship on fire, and took his own men off in safety.

STEPHEN DECATUR

Stephen Decatur rose to the highest commands in the navy and was enthusiastically proclaimed the naval champion of the country. He died in 1820.

NATHANIEL MACON

Macon county was named after Honorable Nathaniel Macon of North Carolina, who was a famous man at the time the county was formed.

Nathaniel Macon had served in the Revolutionary war, and had been elected to the senate of his state before he left the army. He served in the senate until 1785.

In 1791 he was elected to the lower house of the United States congress, and served until 1815. From the year 1801 to 1806 he was speaker of the house. In 1816 he was elected to the United States senate and served until 1828. This made thirty-seven years in congress altogether.

Macon was considered a wise, practical and economical man. In politics he was a Democrat. Twice he declined the office of postmaster-general.

TOWNSHIPS

Townships in Macon county received their names from a variety of sources.

Friend's Creek was so called from the creek which flows through it. The creek was named for George Friend, of Ohio, who was the first settler on its banks and who built the first home in the township.

Whitmore township was named for John Whitmore, who came there in the early days from Connecticut and built a log cabin and began farming. His name was spelled "Whittemore," but his children changed the spelling to "Whitmore." It was said the elder Whittemore did not like the change.

Milam township was named after the Milam apple, which grew abundantly in that locality. The name was suggested by J. B. Gleason.

Niantic township took its name from the town of Niantic which had been named for a town in Connecticut, the former home of some of the early settlers in the township. The name, Niantic, is an Indian name.

Pleasant View was so named because of the view from the mound near the east line of the township.

Long Creek township was named from the creek which flows through it. One report is that the creek was named because of its length, and another is to the effect that it was named for a family named Long.

Blue Mound was so called because the mounds in that vicinity had a blue appearance, due to the profusion of blue flowers.

In naming South Macon township, the name of the county was chosen but the "South" was added to avoid confusion, and because the township is in the south part of the county.

Austin township was named after Benjamin R. Austin, Macon county's first surveyor, the man who surveyed and platted the town of Decatur.

Harristown was named after Major Thomas Harris, who served in the Mexican war. The Macon county men in that war were in his regiment. The village of Harristown first had been called Summit, but the name was changed because there already was a Summit in the state, located in Cook county.

South Wheatland was named in honor of the Pennsylvania home of James Buchanan. The name was suggested by Robert Carpenter.

Mt. Zion township took its name from the church there, organized in early days. It is a scriptural name.

Why Oakley is so named is not definitely known, but it is thought to have been named by one of the old residents, who chose the name, Oakley, because the first postoffice in that vicinity, on an old stage route, was in an oak grove. It is also said that an old settler named it after a town in Ohio. The township took its name from the town of Oakley.

Illini township was given the Indian name, Illini, meaning "Men."

Maroa was named in a unique manner, according to John Crocker, whose grandfather was the first station agent at Maroa and came there before the town was built. The name was made up out of a handful of letters taken out of a hat. Mr. Crocker says that several towns on the Illinois Central were named in the same way.

Some writers of history have said that the town was named after a tribe of Indians called the Maroas, supposed to be a sub-tribe of the Illini.[2] The township received its name from the town.

Hickory Point was so named because of the hickory trees at the point where Stevens Creek left the timber for the prairie.

TOWNS AND VILLAGES

Many of the towns and villages in Macon county were named by the railroad companies which were responsible for their birth. Some were called after early settlers, whose land furnished sites for them.

Oreana and Argenta, meaning gold and silver, were names given by two Illinois Central officials, Messrs. Wood and Smith. They were names of stations on the Union Pacific railway in the west, with which road the men had been connected at one time. There is an Oreana in Nevada and an Argenta in Montana, also one in Utah.

Bearsdale was named for Samuel Bear, an early settler, through whose land the railroad was built.[3]

Blacklands was located on land belonging to John Black that had long been in possession of his family, and the station was named for the family.

Boody was named after Colonel William Boody, first president of the Decatur and East St. Louis railroad, now a part of the Wabash system.

Green Switch was named for Joshua Green, an Englishman for years a leading citizen of the county. His home was the brick house just north of the elevator.

Hervey City was named for Robert G. Hervey, who was prominent in the construction of, and was president of the Paris and Decatur railroad, later the Pennsylvania.

Knights was named for Sam B. Knight, who was general freight agent of the Wabash.

Warrensburg was named for John K. Warren, former mayor of Decatur. He was director of the old Pekin, Lincoln and Decatur railroad at the time the road was built. The town of Warrensburg was platted by Warren and Durfee.

Wyckles station was named after Joseph Wycle, early settler who owned the land. He ran the stage stand called Four Mile House.

Suffern was named for James Suffern, who established a shipping station there.

Casner was named for Lewis B. Casner, wealthy farmer whose farm was north of the village.

Antioch took its name from the nearby Antioch church, the church being named for the Biblical city of Antioch.

Forsyth was named for Colonel Robert Forsyth, the first general freight agent of the Illinois Central, who bought land and built a home there.

The name of Elwin was made up from the names of its founders, Elwood and Martin.

Heman was formerly called Bullardsville, after Warner Bullard, who ran an elevator there. When the P. D. and E. railroad was taken over by the Illinois Central, the Illinois Central changed the name of the station to Heman, though the postoffice continued to be called Bullardsville.

Emery was named for Major Charles F. Emery, former member of the legislature and prominent resident of Maroa.

Turpin station was named for Jerry Turpin, prominent land owner who lived near the station.

Walker station was named after J. W. Walker. It was first called Willow Branch, but on June 6, 1882, the name was changed to Walker to conform with the postoffice there.

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[1] More than one story is told as to why Illinoians were called Suckers.

The name was first bestowed, it is believed, during the days of the working of the lead mines at Galena. In 1826 and 1827 thousands of Missouri and Illinois men went to Galena in the spring, worked the mines during the summer, then returned home in the fall, establishing a similarity in habits with the fishy tribe. The Missourians were the first to call the Illinois men suckers, and in retaliation the "Suckers" called the Missourians "Pukes" because, it was claimed, Missouri had vomited forth all its worst population to the Galena lead mines.

Another story is to the effect that the pioneers were so called because, like the sucker sprouts of the tobacco plant, they had stripped themselves off from the parent stem, their native state, and gone away.

[2] "It is only within the last few years that I had heard this suggestion that the town was named after an Indian tribe," said Mr. Crocker in 1929. "Not in any reading that I ever did or otherwise have I ever heard of a tribe of Indians named Maroa. I was brought up with the belief that the town was named by taking a handful of letters out of a hat and making a word from them. While I have not anything in the way of records or evidence, it is my belief that the town was named in that way." Others familiar with Illinois history agree with Mr. Crocker that that is the way many Illinois Central names were made.

[3] The story is told that when three railroad officials dropped off at Bearsdale and asked the name of the place, somebody said "Lickskillet". They did not like that name, and, knowing that Sam Bear owned the land through which the railroad passed, they dubbed the place Bearsdale. Lickskillet was the name by which the school in the neighborhood was called. That school is now the Prairie Center school.

CHAPTER XVII

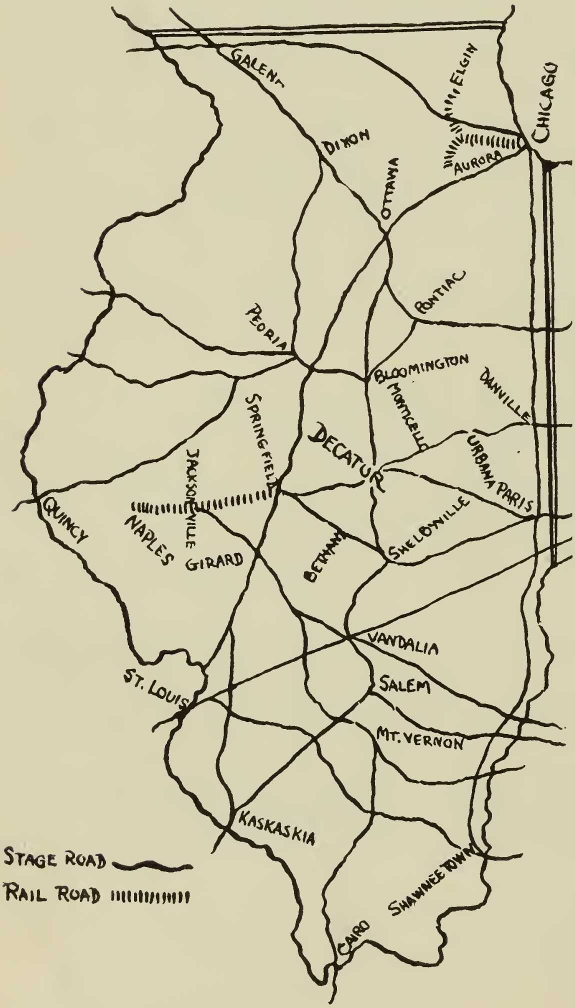
TRANSPORTATION

FROM its beginning until the year 1854 when the railroads came, Macon county struggled with the transportation problem.

Life in those days meant going without things, unless they could be raised on one's own ground. Money was scarce, and markets were so far away as to make it difficult to deliver anything one might produce to sell. For years people fretted because of the barriers with which they were surrounded.

The only hope seemed to be transportation by water. For years the talk went on about making the Sangamon a navigable river. The legislature had once declared the Sangamon a navigable river but that didn't make it one. One time a steamboat did get up the river as far as Springfield, but it had a great deal of difficulty in turning around there.

When experiments were made to send flatboats down the river from here, people lined the banks of the river to watch the boats, and to go to the rescue if help seemed necessary.



STAGE ROUTES IN 1851

One time in 1845 a flatboat was built and went down the river in charge of Captain William Rea. The next year the firm of Peddecord, Armstrong and Prather undertook to send five boats with hogs and corn to New Orleans. The boats made the trip as far as Long Point, south of Niantic, without much trouble, but had to stop there for the winter, awaiting high water in the spring to finish the journey.

When spring came three of the boats were outfitted and started on the trip south. One stopped at Natchez, and the other two went on to New Orleans. John Hanks, J. Y. Braden and Hosea Armstrong captained these boats at the start. At Beardstown, however, Armstrong turned his command over to Moses Spencer.

At the time these boats had left Henry Prather had gone up and down the river making speeches, in which he urged the people to help remove obstructions from the river, so boats could get through. The people responded well. For days they worked.

While the trip made by these boats was successful in a way, the difficulties had been too great to make the project a profitable one. It was little consolation to spend so much effort and time and work, and make no profit from them. It seemed as if the difficulties in the way of navigating the Sangamon successfully were too much to be overcome, and people gave up the idea.

All schemes for railroads had failed. Now it seemed that water connection with the outside world had to be given up. Macon county residents feared that they would always be isolated.

Naturally with no railroads or water routes, highway travel increased. Everything brought from outside was hauled in. Emigrants were passing through in large numbers to the west. But roads remained just as bad as they were before. Though they increased in number, they did not improve in quality.[1] There was no system of maintaining or improving the highways.

Establishment of stage lines helped a little, but the stages did not become popular because of the difficulty in plowing through mud.[2] Too often the passengers had to help pry the coach out of the mire.

MAIL SERVICE

Air mail wasn't known in the early days of Macon county, but it should have been, for that was the time when only air routes could have provided adequate mail service. Had the pioneer expected mail every few hours in the day, as modern folks do, he would have been sadly out of luck. However, lack of mail service did not worry him at all, for if he got a letter once a year from "back home" he was happy.

Letters were not so numerous in those days. One good reason was that it cost too much to send them. When postage was 25 cents, and cash scarce, one could not expect to write or receive such luxuries as letters very often. Postage was paid at destination rather than sending point, and often a letter would lie unclaimed for weeks because the person to whom it was addressed was unable to round up the necessary two bits to pay the postage.

Before Decatur had a postoffice, settlers had to go to Springfield for their mail. Afterwards mail came once a week from Shelbyville. Perhaps it would be better to say the mail pouch would come, for often there was not a single piece of mail in it.

Gradually mail routes became more numerous, and after a time Decatur was connected with Springfield, Covington, Ind., Bloomington, Charleston, Ewington, Paris and Edwardsville. By 1851 Decatur was receiving mail from these towns every week, and sometimes two or three times a week.

The mail service could not have been called fast—except when the wolves chased the carriers. Then sometimes it was ahead of time!

Silas Packard, who carried mail between Decatur and Paris and between Decatur and Bloomington in 1847 and 1848 often used to tell of his experiences on those trips. He was considerably more of a "rural" carrier in those days than the rural carrier of today. In the lonesome journey between here and Paris, nearly seventy miles, there were not a half dozen houses. On the route to Bloomington the first house after leaving Decatur was at Salt Creek. Then came the tiny village of Clinton. But between Clinton and Bloomington there was not a house! His horse and the wild deer were his only company.

Young Packard thought things were just coming his way when, once in a while, in real good weather, his employer, Landy Harrell, allowed him to use his open buggy for the trip. Most of his journeying was done on horseback. Harrell had the mail contract from the government, and employed Packard, then a youth of about 18, to carry the mail. He was paid fifty cents a day. And he saved money on the job!

Two days were required to make the trip from Decatur to Paris. Usually the carrier stayed two days in Paris, then made the return trip, making six days for the round trip. Often he did not have one piece of mail in the pouch when he left Decatur. After stages were put in operation on mail routes, the mail was carried by stage, but often it was necessary to go back to the horseback route, for a horse could get through many times when a stage would get stuck in the mud.

On the trip to Paris it was necessary to cross the Okaw river twice. When the routes were laid out, the government inspector placed marks on trees on the river bank at the fords, as a guide to the carrier as to whether or not he should attempt to cross the river. If the water had risen to the mark on the tree the carrier was not obligated to go on. He could return home, and he would be given credit for having made the entire trip. If the water was that high, the carrier would have been compelled to swim his horse to get across, and a carrier was not expected to do that.

STAGE STANDS

Macon county had "filling stations" years ago, but they were for man and beast, rather than the automobile. They were the stage stands, where the stage made regular stops to change horses, to eat, and, if stop were made at night, to secure lodging for passengers, drivers and horses.

Weather conditions had some effect on the stops made at the stage stands. If the weather were fair, roads good, and change of horses made occasionally at stands along the way, one could make the trip to Springfield in one day. If roads were bad, it took two days or more to get through. Sometimes a "box on two wheels" was substituted for the heavy stage, in bad weather.

The stage driver was a man of privileges. He was given the entire road when he made his appearance. That was even required by law. To the small boy the stage driver was a hero; a man who could tell wonderful tales of the things he had seen in his travels! Every lad tried to imitate that peculiar swing and crack of the whip which only the stage driver could muster. It was something worth while to be on hand when the stage rolled in, pulled by its four perspiring steeds, over which the driver flourished his long whip.

The stage usually had seats for six people. Passengers were not always as enthusiastic about the stage as the small boys were. Often they had to walk a good part of their way. Paying their fare and then walking, or helping to pull the coach out of mud, wasn't anything funny to them. No wonder they looked forward to the time when a better means of transportation would be provided. Stage owners didn't profit much and often lost money. Changes in ownership became frequent.[3]

Leonard Ashton, who ran a stage between Decatur and Springfield, used to brag that his stage was "never more than a week behind schedule, even in the worst weather." He probably meant it as a joke, but his statement was not far from the truth. In wet weather stages were delayed for days. It was impossible to keep to schedules.

Among the stage stands near Decatur was one built by Christopher Miller on the north side of what is now Route 10, about four miles west of Decatur. The house, made of logs, was built broadside to the road. There were two rooms on the ground floor, with double chimney between, and a fireplace in each. Above was the loft. Guests for the night in the loft often woke up in the morning in the winter time to find themselves under a neat little snow drift.

Miller had come to Macon county from Grayson county, Ky., in 1829. His grandson, Abraham C. Miller, in after years often used to tell how it was one of the treats of his boyhood days to go to Grandpap's when the stage was due.

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[1] The story has been told before as to how the Bloomington road was located, but it is worth repeating. The first road which had come into Decatur from the north had swung to the west near Emery, passing the Indian camp ground on the west side of the Hockaday farm. The home of the Hockadays was at the east side of the land. They wanted a road past their house. The Hockadays heard that a circus was coming to Decatur from the north. So B. B. Hockaday went to Maroa to meet it.

"Do you want the shortest and best way to Decatur?" he asked the circus leader.

"Of course," answered the show man.

"Then follow me," said Hockaday.

The circus followed Hockaday, who led the way directly south, following a straight line into Decatur. By the time all the circus wagons had passed over the route a road had been made. Thus was established the road now known as State Route No. 2.

[2] John Kaylor tells of an incident he remembers, showing the difficulty of transporting things over mud roads. One time on a trip to Springfield he met an outfit moving an immense boiler, 24 feet long and 6 feet in diameter. To draw the truck 100 steers had been yoked together in pairs. The mud was so deep that at some places the wheels would sink until the axles were almost out of sight. The crew in charge numbered seven. The leather whips carried by the bullwhackers were ten feet long, attached to an ox-goad and finished off with a "cracker" of buckskin. When this whip was swung by an expert, the sound equalled that of a rifle shot.

[3] In 1853 Jesse H. Elliott, proprietor of the Macon house, was advertising that he was prepared to run semi-weekly hacks between Paris and Decatur, one to leave each place every Tuesday and Friday at 6 a. m. and arrive at the opposite point Wednesday and Saturday at 6 p. m. This line connected with a daily line from Terre Haute to Paris and a tri-weekly line from Decatur to Springfield.

"The best drivers will be employed," says the ad, "the fare will be moderate, and the entire distance will be run in daylight. Every necessity and appropriate accommodation for the comfort of passengers will be provided."

CHAPTER XVIII

THE 1839 DIRECTORY

A list of the residents of Decatur in 1839 was given The Decatur Review by David Hummell, of Lincoln, Ill., who lived in Decatur that year and for some years afterwards. It gives one a clear glimpse of the citizenship of the town at that time. It is the nearest we have to a directory of Decatur in that early day.

DAVID HUMMELL

This list was not made up by Mr. Hummell until seventy years after the time it represented, and for that reason it is remarkable for its completeness. It might be expected that after such a lapse of time, Mr. Hummell might have missed a few names, yet he probably did not miss many, for other old settlers have verified the list.

Mr. Hummell came to Decatur in 1839 and became well acquainted with the few hundred people who were citizens of the town then. Those citizens included men who were prominent in the upbuilding of the city. Some of their descendants are just as prominent in the progress of Decatur today.

THE LIST

The list as compiled by Mr. Hummell follows:

(The first named were heads of families; the number preceding the name shows the number of grown persons in the family.)

6 Benjamin Austin.
2 Dr. James Read.
3 Mr. Shultz.
2 Henry Prather.
2 Hosea Armstrong.
2 William Cantrill.
2 N. Ashby.
5 Dr. J. G. Speer.
2 George Querrey.
2 Samuel Nesbit.
2 Preston Butler.
2 Dr. William T. Crissey.
3 Mrs. Duly and daughters.
2 Mr. Maddox.
3 William Webb.
4 Mr. Cowan.
2 J. Y. Braden.
2 George Galbraith.
4 William Kibby.
2 Kirby Benedict.
2 David Rawles.
2 James Pierce.
3 Hartwell Robinson.
2 Thomas Johnson.
2 Rolla White.
2 Alex Mahood.
2 Alfred Barnwell.
2 Robert Johnson.
2 Joe Stevens.
2 Capt. D. L. Allen.
5 Landy Harrell.
4 Ross Elliott.
2 J. J. Peddecord.
2 Mark Turner.
2 Col. E. D. Carter.
3 Henry Hummell
2 Samuel McKinley.
4 James Nesbit and mother.

2 R. Wren.
2 Rev. William S. Crissey.
2 Philo Hill.
4 Leonard Ashton.
2 William Williams.
2 James F. Montgomery.
2 Ninian Peddecord.
2 Dayton Dunham.
3 Mr. Norris.

The single men and the women they afterward married:

Samuel Allen.
Benjamin Dillehunt, Miss Nesbit.
J. J. Peddecord, Mrs. Adamson.
J. D. Tait, Susan Spangler.
M. Elson, Miss Mary Sawyer.
E. McClellan, Judith Snyder.
William Stamper, Ann M. Snyder.
John Post, Miss Kaufman.
Seth Post, Miss Bunn.
Robert Allen, Miss Maddox.
James Draper.
William Mayers.
William Condell, Elizabeth Packard.
Wash. Nesbit, Miss Prince.
Dr. Ira Curtis, Jane Butler.
Champion Butler.
James Ashton.
Peter Palmer.
Mason Packard.
Anson Packard, Miss Norris.
Edmund Packard, Miss Speer.
Dr. Joseph King, Marietta Packard.
Charles Pringle, Miss Harrell.
William Bosworth, Minerva Daley.
Benjamin Oglesby.
Willis Oglesby, Miss Glore.
Mat Bradshaw.
Samuel Dewees.
Amos Bodkin.
Silas Packard, Mary Sawyer.
Daniel Robinson, Miss Daley.
Dayton Dunham, Marilla Robinson.
Charles Emerson, Miss Harrell.
Carl Bosworth.
E. O. Smith, Harriet Krone.
Joseph Dewees.
Hildrey Adamson.
Enoch Gibbs, Miss Ashton.
Benjamin Sawyer.
Watt Culver.
Frank Emerson.
William Dewees.
Warner Oglesby.
John Lee.
Miss Zilpha Butler.
Felix Butler.
Jerome R. Gorin.
Jackson Sinclair.

The population of Macon county about that time was estimated at 3,200. The census of 1840 enumerated 3,233 persons.

Edmiston McClellan, mentioned in the above list, became one of Decatur's best known men. He lived in the city from 1835 until 1900. For twenty-eight years in succession he served the county as circuit clerk. Before that he had been a clerk in various stores, had done surveying, had been a deputy sheriff, city marshal and deputy circuit clerk.

One of the men who came to Decatur in 1839 and who was identified with the business life of the city for years was Berry H. Cassell, who came from Pennsylvania. He started a tin shop, backed by David L. Allen, and tin cups made by him and peddled over the country were the basis of his fortune. He also ran a hardware and grocery store and other enterprises. He bought up a great deal of land, and at one time owned the land from Franklin to Jasper street, between Wood street and the Wabash tracks, and 400 or 500 acres in the vicinity of the Wabash properties. He gave the site of the Illinois Central depot to that railroad.

Berry and Henry Cassell were in the hotel business for several years, operating the Cassell house, which they had bought from Landy Harrell. It stood on the present site of the St. Nicholas hotel.

BUSINESS VENTURES

Decatur added several business enterprises in 1839. The old ox mill, one of the most interesting of the early day institutions of the county, was erected that year by J. J. Peddecord, Ninian Peddecord, and E. O. Smith.[1] Its principal product was corn meal. The mill was located on East Prairie street, near the Town branch (where Broadway is now).

West of the ox mill was built the Macon house, Decatur's first hotel, which later became known as the Revere house and for many years was Decatur's leading hostelry. The hotel was built by David L. Allen and Thomas H. Read, and James Nesbit was proprietor for a time. It was located at the southeast corner of Prairie and Franklin.

In 1839 the first manufacturing concern using steam power was established by Wilson Allen. It was a combination saw mill, grist mill and carding factory. Three years later it burned down, one Sunday afternoon.

William Kibby established a distillery in 1839 near what was afterwards known as Imboden springs, in the south part of town (a block west of Greenwood avenue near the cemetery). It was operated by Kibby only a year.

James D. Tait came to Decatur in 1839 and opened the first saddle and harness shop. He walked all the way here from Naples, Ill., on the Illinois river, carrying his tools on his back. Frequently during the trip he was obliged to wade water up to his chin. Every slough and hollow was filled with water. He bought his goods in Springfield and had them hauled here by team.

Leonard Ashton, who carried mail between Decatur and Paris, had the first livery stable. It stood on ground now covered by the rear of the Y. M. C. A. annex.

By 1840 Decatur was supplied with grocery, dry goods, drug, cigar and general stores; it had wagon shop and livery stable; it had saloons, two churches, distillery, harness shop and hotels. It was beginning to take on the appearance of a town.

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[1] Motive power for the mill was obtained by placing three or four cows on an inclined wheel, their heads secured to a cross beam. The cattle walked forward. All they had to do was to keep walking, but they never advanced any. Smith's history tells how the machinery occasionally got detached and a "runaway" resulted. The cattle became frightened and started to run. The faster they went, the faster the wheels turned, and the harder it was to get the machinery stopped. Things happened then. Sometimes the cattle fell, and were dragged by the neck. Excited citizens rushed to aid by throwing logs or rails under the wheel. With cattle bellowing, machinery shrieking, rails crashing, "Uncle Henry" giving shrill orders. noise and confusion everywhere, it made an occasion to be remembered.

CHAPTER XIX

MACON COUNTY BAR

FOR five years after the organization of Macon county and the platting of Decatur, the county had no lawyer it could call its own. The village probably had little appeal to a hustling young attorney. Yet, in a new county, with new problems arising, with the population increasing, disputes to be settled, and not to be forgotten—a brand new court house in which to practice—Decatur had need for a representative of the legal profession.

Finally one came. He not only had the distinction of being the county's first resident lawyer, but he proved to be the right sort for the beginning of the history of the bar in Macon county. That first lawyer was Charles Emerson, native of New Hampshire.

CHARLES EMERSON

Charles Emerson came to Illinois in 1833, attended Illinois college at Jacksonville one term, studied law in Springfield, then chose Decatur for a location to practice his profession. He settled here in 1834, and that was the beginning of a long and honorable career. He lived in Decatur and Long Creek township the rest of his life, except three years, from 1847 to 1850, when he resided in Paris.

Mr. Emerson was elected to the legislature twice, served as circuit judge from 1853 to 1867, and in 1869 was elected to the constitutional convention. He attended part of the convention, but illness prevented his remaining until the end. He passed away in April, 1870. Mr. Emerson had many admirable qualities which brought him the respect and love of every one who knew him. He was a man of modest disposition, charitable, unaffected, broad-minded and impartial.

Macon county's second resident attorney, who settled in Decatur in 1836, was Kirby Benedict, who afterwards became associate justice of the territory of New Mexico, an appointment he received from President Franklin Pierce in 1853. He served three years in that office, and then was appointed chief justice of the same territory.

Mr. Benedict was probate judge in Macon county from 1838 to 1843. He continued law practice here until 1849, when he moved to Paris. His death occurred Feb. 28, 1874.

Joel S. Post was the first attorney admitted to the practice of law from this county. He came to Decatur in 1839 and studied law with Charles Emerson. He was admitted to the bar in 1841. Mr. Post served in the War with Mexico, attaining the rank of captain. In 1856 he was elected to the state senate and served two terms. During his service in the senate he was instrumental in securing the passage of the law establishing the state normal school at Normal, Ill.

Macon county's first state's attorney was Jonathan H. Pugh, a Springfield lawyer, who came here for the first term of circuit court. He was a brilliant lawyer, and was one of the first in the state to advocate the building of railroads. He served in the state senate, and in 1834 was in the race for governor of the state, but was defeated by Joseph Duncan.

Samuel Drake Lockwood, who presided over the first term of circuit court in Macon county, was elected associate justice of the Illinois supreme court in 1825 and held that office until 1848. In 1825 Judge Lockwood revised the Illinois criminal code, and it remains largely the law today. Judge Lockwood represented Morgan county in the constitutional convention of 1847.

Decatur court rooms have seen a brilliant array of lawyers in the hundred years of the county's history.[1] Some were men who reached high places in the nation. The early custom of lawyers to "ride the circuit" was responsible for bringing many of them to Decatur. Yet Decatur can be justly proud also of its long line of resident lawyers, the men who established practice here and who built up reputations at home.

Stories have often been told of the days when Decatur was in the eighth judicial circuit and such men as Abraham Lincoln, Stephen A. Douglas, Leonard Swett, David Davis, John T. Stuart, E. D. Baker and other notable figures came here when court was in session.

It was customary then for the lawyers to travel from one county seat to another with the court. The county seats thus had the privilege of entertaining some of the most able men of the profession.

CIRCUIT COURT JUDGES

During the first few years of Macon county's existence, it was the requirement that judges of the supreme court do circuit court duty. That is how it happened that Judge Samuel D. Lockwood presided over circuit court in Macon county from 1830 to 1835. When a law was passed in 1835, which brought about the separation of these two offices, Stephen T. Logan was elected to the office of judge of this circuit. Macon county was then a part of the first judicial circuit.

As Illinois became more thickly settled and the population increased, changes were made from time to time in the division of the state into judicial circuits. During these changes Macon county was a part of several different circuits. Under the apportionment of 1897, when the number of circuits, outside of Cook county, was increased to seventeen, Macon county became a part of the circuit it is in today, the Sixth. Other counties in the Sixth circuit are Dewitt, Douglas, Moultrie, Piatt, and Champaign.

PRESIDED IN DECATUR

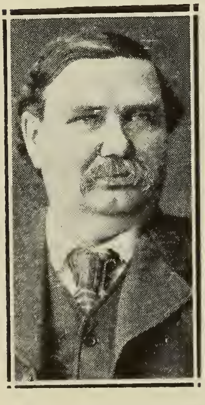
Judges who have held court in Decatur since 1830 have been:

S. D. Lockwood, 1830-1835.
Stephen T. Logan, 1835-1837 (resigned).
Jesse B. Thomas, Jr., 1837-1839.
Samuel H. Treat, 1839-1849.
David Davis, 1849-1853.
Charles Emerson, 1853-1867.
Arthur J. Gallagher, 1867-1872.
C. B. Smith, 1872-1885.
W. E. Nelson, 1877-1879.
Jacob W. Wilkin, 1879-1888 (resigned).
James F. Hughes, 1885-1891.
Ferdinand Bookwalter, 1888-1897.
Edward P. Vail, 1888-1903.
Francis P. Wright, 1891-1897 (resigned).
William G. Cochran, 1897-1910.
Solon Philbrick, 1903-1910.
Franklyn H. Boggs, 1914 to date.
William C. Johns, 1903-1914 (died).
George A. Sentel, 1915 to 1927.
W. K. Whitfield, 1914-1921.
James S. Baldwin, 1921 to date.

RESIDENT LAWYERS

A. Brower Bunn, native of Ohio, who came to Decatur in 1850, and who was considered one of the city's best lawyers, was a man of interesting personality. In pleading cases in court he made much of the dramatic effects, swaying the emotions of his listeners with marked success. Mr. Bunn held at different times the offices of city clerk, city attorney, member of the legislature, and assessor of internal revenue.

John W. Smith, native of Macon county, was not only an able lawyer, but a writer of considerable ability, and it was he who gave us the first history of Macon county. He also wrote a number of law texts. Mr. Smith, a graduate of the Albany law school in New York, began practice here as the junior member of the firm of Emerson and Smith. Later he was associated with J. M. Clokey and Brice I. Sterrett. After he left Decatur he practiced law in Chicago. Mr. Smith was deeply interested in books and collected for his library many rare volumes.

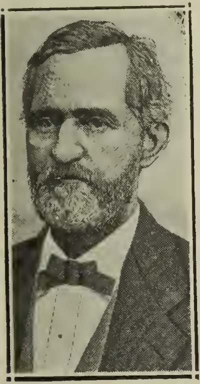


JOHN W. SMITH

Sheridan Wait became a resident of Decatur in 1852 and was a partner first of Charles Emerson and later of R. J. Oglesby. During the war he was an adjutant-general, and he also held the office of canal commissioner.

Colonel Nathan Tupper and Lieutenant-Colonel Ansel Tupper, brothers, came in 1854. They are mentioned elsewhere, as is Richard J. Oglesby.

D. L. Bunn, who became a citizen of Macon county in 1855, read law in the office of Captain J. S. Post, and in 1862 was granted license to practice law. From 1862 to 1868 he was state's attorney.



A. J. GALLAGHER

Judge Arthur J. Gallagher reached the highest rank at the bar. He was a man of great intellect and was known for his fairness. He succeeded Charles Emerson as circuit judge, and he was well fitted for that office. He was elected to the bench in 1867 and served until 1873. He was a member of the law firm of Gallagher, Wait and Oglesby. Also, at another time he was in partnership with Jerome R. Gorin.

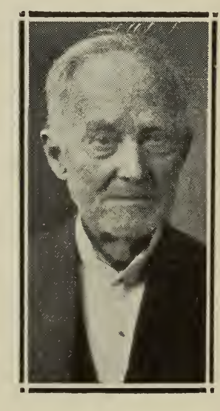
Judge Gallagher came to Decatur in 1856 from Vandalia, where he had been practicing law. He studied law with Lyman Trumbull, at Belleville. In 1852 he was elected to the legislature, and he also served as register of the U. S. land office in Vandalia.

Judge Gallagher married Rachel Smith, the daughter of E. O. Smith, in 1865.

Coming in 1857, William E. Nelson all his life was a leading lawyer and civic worker. He was on a state commission in 1869, a member of the legislature in 1871, circuit judge in 1877, county judge from 1886 to 1894.

Judge Anthony Thornton was one of the most able lawyers that ever practiced in Macon county. He came here from Shelbyville, and after a few years residence in Decatur returned to Shelbyville.

Among other distinguished lawyers who practiced in Decatur were C. C. McComas, state's attorney; Hugh Crea, known particularly for his attention to railroad law; K. H. Roby, partner of William E. Nelson; S. F. Greer, county judge, member of board of education and member of city council; John R. Eden, member of congress; Isaac A. Buckingham, city attorney, state's attorney, and in general practice for many years; C. A. Ewing of the firm of Crea and Ewing; Isaac R. Mills, city attorney, state's attorney, and district revenue collector, who was killed in a railroad wreck at Litchfield in 1904; E. P. Vail and W. C. Johns, both of whom



WM. E. NELSON

served as circuit judge. Mr. Vail, who was on the bench from 1888 to 1903, left Decatur for Chicago where he established a law practice. W. C. Johns was judge from 1903 until his death in 1914.

BAR ASSOCIATION

In the year 1902 the members of the Decatur Bar organized the Macon County Bar association, its object being to maintain a law library and to promote fraternal spirit among the members. Judge W. C. Johns was the first president and James S. Baldwin its secretary. The library established has been added to from time to time, and is now an extremely valuable collection of books valued at about $20,000. In 1923 the association presented the library to Macon county, upon condition that the county assume care and control of it and keep up the continuations. The library is now housed in the court house and is open to the public. The Macon County Bar association was dissolved and the Decatur Bar association was then organized and is still functioning.

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[1] In early days the court had an important officer that is not known in present day life. He was the court crier. It was his business to call the witnesses and litigants into court when their cases were called. John Moreland, court crier for years, had a voice well adapted for the part. It was like a trumpet and could be heard for blocks away. When some one was wanted, Moreland went to the second story of the court house, leaned out of a window, and in stentorian voice called out the name of the person wanted. This was his method: "W—J—Con-dell, W. J. Condell, W. J. CONDELL, COME TO COURT." The custom of court crier was discontinued after Arthur J. Gallagher became judge. He ruled that it was the business of litigants and witnesses to be at the court house when their cases were called. Moreland ran a bus between the Cloudas house and the depot. As an announcer of schedules he could have given pointers on clearness to present day radio announcers.

CHAPTER XX

THE POWERS FAMILY

TWO horses bearing two brothers rode into the little village of Decatur one summer day in 1839. The two men had heard that a railroad to pass through the village had been surveyed, and that the town was likely to become a place of importance. They decided to come and see, and, if they thought advisable, to invest some money in government land hereabouts.

The two brothers were George Westcott Powers and Samuel St. John Powers. They had ridden here all the way on horseback from Mobile, Ala., although their native state was New York. Coming from Alabama, they journeyed through Kentucky and Tennessee, and crossed the Ohio river at Shawneetown.

The elder brother, George W. Powers, invested in land, and made all arrangements for building a home upon it. Then he returned to Alabama. He had a double reason for returning to that state. One was to look after his business affairs there, since he had decided to locate in Decatur, and the other was to get married and bring his bride back with him.

He left in charge of his brother Samuel the task of seeing that the house was built. The main part was of brick, and this was the first brick house in the county outside of Decatur. It was Mr. Powers' intention to build entirely of brick, but it had been impossible to secure enough brick, and it was necessary to use lumber for a part of the structure. In that day brick had to be hauled from a distance. The wood used in the house was oak, hickory and black walnut. The construction work was done by Benjamin Dillehunt.

POWERS' FARM HOME

An Indian trail had run through the Powers land. Various articles of pottery, vessels, arrowheads, and the like had been found on the place.

Mr. Powers and Miss Almira Avery Giles were married on April 27, 1840, Mrs. Powers having been a teacher for several years in Tuscaloosa, Ala. She was a graduate of the Emma Willard seminary in Troy, N. Y. Their wedding trip was the journey to their new home in Illinois and their method of traveling a double carriage drawn by a pair of dapple gray horses. They were accompanied here by Mr. Powers's mother, Mrs. Abigail H. Powers, and his younger sister, Sarah Ann Powers. It took thirty-nine days for the trip, the party arriving in Decatur, June 4, 1840.[1]

Some interesting incidents of the childhood days of Mrs. Powers have been told by her daughter, Mrs. Sarah Powers Durfee. One of them she describes as follows:

"Almira Avery Giles was born at East Charlemont, Mass., March 3, 1818. Her birth, with two teeth, and a veil over her face, caused the superstitious to attach more importance to her than to many others. Almira was the second child, first daughter of Almira Avery and Dr. John Giles. When Almira was five years old a relative, who had quite a large family of boys, came to visit this family, and the mother was so pleased with Almira that she besought the child's mother to let her take her home for a visit.

"With the same pride and care of the mothers of the present day, and with much more difficulty, the mother, Almira, made her ready, and the child returned with the guests to their home. In a few months, letters were written for the child's return, but receiving no reply, a member of the family took the journey and found the family had moved 'west' leaving no trace. The parents were in great distress and for three years lived in uncertainty.

"At that time, Jonathan Avery, the grandfather, a wounded Revolutionary war soldier, had to attend to some business and started on horseback for east New York, 'West', as it was called. After traveling a number of days he saw some children by the roadside and recognized Almira, although tanned very brown and in an untidy condition. He called her by name and she answered. Without further delay, he lifted her up onto his horse, turned back, and in due time delivered her to her parents.

"There was great rejoicing in his daughter's household when Jonathan returned with the lost Almira. The mother gave her face, hands and feet a thorough soaking in buttermilk, as she was so tanned one would scarcely know her to be a white child. She had been gone three years, and was eight years old. As she had not been sent to school, she did not even know her alphabet."

Almira started to school at once. At the age of fourteen she entered an academy at Bennington, Vt., later going to Troy to enter the Emma Willard seminary. One of her studies there was French, and as it happened that her roommate was a French girl, she became proficient in that language.

It was through another seminary friend that she met her future husband. Sarah Ann Powers, sister of George W. Powers, lived near the seminary and was a student there, and the two girls became fast friends. When George came home from college on a visit, he was introduced to Miss Giles. The friendship resulted in their marriage several years later at Tuscaloosa, Ala., after which they came to Decatur to make their home.

Mr. Powers contracted for a mail route for four years, and employed four young men to carry the mail. One was his brother, Samuel, another was John Harrell, another Baxter Hunting.

The second year after the Powerses came, the corn crop was enormous. But there was no market for it, outside of St. Louis and Chicago, and the market was too low to make it profitable to haul the grain that distance. Only three cents a bushel was offered. So a lot of splendid Macon county corn that year, instead of being sold, was used as fuel in the fireplace.

Macon county's good soil was producing other things besides corn. The pumpkins grew so large that only three could be put in a wagon bed. With two more resting on top, one had a big load of pumpkins. Wild strawberries were so plentiful on the Powers land that after the horses had been walking through them, it looked as though their feet were bleeding.

Mr. Powers became well acquainted with the land in this part of the state and located all the land which his brother, William, purchased, as well as the tracts he himself bought. William Powers was then in Havana, Cuba, and sent money to his brother in Decatur to invest in land.

In later years, William Powers, who was unmarried, located in Bloomington, but he spent much time in Decatur and erected a number of buildings here, one of them a business structure of three stories, in the 100 block East Main street, south side. At the time it was erected it was the most pretentious business building Decatur had. It is still in use.

Chauncey M. Powers, another brother, settled northwest of Decatur, near Boiling Springs, on a farm. After his death, his family moved to Tennessee.

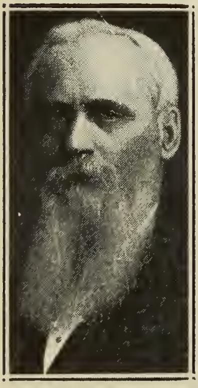
George W. Powers was elected to the legislature in 1844 and served in that capacity until his death, Sept. 16, 1849. Before his death he had been urged to run for the United States senate. Mr. Powers was the second attorney admitted to the bar in Macon county.

His business interests demanded his presence in Decatur to such an extent that the family left the farm home and moved in to Decatur in the fall of 1847. Mr. Powers bought property on North Main street, the present site of the Decatur public library and five acres to the north. It was necessary to remodel the house on the property, and the family lived for two years on Wood street, moving to the remodeled home on North Main in March, 1849.[2] Mr. Powers had his office in the brick court house on Lincoln square.

After the removal of the G. W. Powers family to Decatur, the farm home continued to be occupied by Samuel Powers, who had married Caroline Giles, sister of Mrs. Powers. Sarah Ann Powers, young sister of Mr. Powers, had married Rev. Fielding N. Ewing, prominent Presbyterian minister. Both these weddings had taken place at the G. W. Powers country home. Rev. and Mrs. F. N. Ewing in later years came to Decatur to live. They erected their home on Ewing avenue in 1867. Mr. Ewing died in 1880 and Mrs. Ewing in 1902.

G. W. Powers's death occurred in the North Main street home just six months after the family had become settled there. Mrs. Powers, left with three youngsters to support, began to teach, opening a school in her own home. Later she taught in the Masonic building, and still later in a brick house on West North street.

She was the first president of the Ladies' Library association, the forerunner of the Decatur public library, the story of which is told in another chapter. Mrs. Powers passed away April 2, 1900.


SAMUEL POWERS

Samuel Powers was a great lover of the outdoors and of horses, and as a breeder of fine horses he became known over the country. For some years he made his home on the farm. Decatur has long since built up to, and away beyond. that farm home. Its location now would be described as the 1500 block East Locust street.

When Samuel Powers moved in to Decatur, he built a home at the south end of Powers lane, choosing the location because of the seven fine hickory trees on the hill. The house is still standing at 595 Powers lane. Mr. Powers was in California during the gold rush, and brought back thousands of dollars in gold. He passed away in 1885. and his wife in 1909.

Orlando Powers, another brother, visited here several times before he located in Decatur. In 1849 he brought his bride, who had been Charlotte Given, for a visit at the G. W. Powers home. They arrived three weeks after the death of G. W. Powers, not knowing until their arrival in Decatur that the brother had died. The next summer they moved to a house at Franklin and Wood streets, the present site of the Moose club. Later Mr. Powers built a mill on South Franklin street. He was in the milling business for some years, ran an abstract office, conducted a general merchandise store and later a shoe business. For ten years he lived in Jacksonville, then returned to Decatur and made his home at 317 West Decatur street. It is now the home of W. M. Wood.

ORLANDO POWERS HOME

As a business man he was extremely successful. He was given credit one time for helping to save the day during a run on a bank, by offering to give his personal note for whatever amount any depositor wished to withdraw.

Mr. Powers in 1889 built the Powers grand opera house, which for years was Decatur's popular theater. After it burned in 1914, the Hotel Orlando, named for him, was erected by his children on the site of the opera house.

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[1] When Mrs. Almira Avery Powers first came to Decatur with a pretty peaches and cream complexion, she was suspected (Horrors, must we tell it!) of painting her cheeks. The women of the community just had to know!

So one day they invited Mrs. Powers and her sister-in-law, Sarah Ann, to a quilting bee, probably their first social event in their new home. Before the noon meal was served, one of the ladies asked the two newcomers if they did not want to wash, and conducted them to a place where a wash basin and towel had been provided. Having been warned beforehand that they should adapt themselves to the customs of their new home, the two women obligingly "washed up" before sitting down to the meal.

Later on, a neighbor confidentially told Mrs. Powers that the women wanted to find out if she painted her cheeks, and after she had washed her face that day of the quilting bee they had examined the towel!

[2] The homes of George W. Powers introduced several innovations in the way of household equipment to Macon county. Mr. Powers brought home the first cook stove. The first lard lamp, bought in Springfield, was another innovation. It was a glass bowl on a metal base, standing on a slab of marble. The globe was of ground glass, with a grape design. My, how everybody admired the beautiful light made by this new-fangled lamp! This was something different from tallow candles.

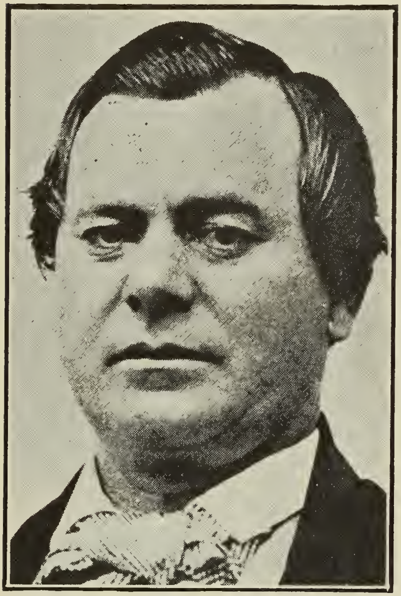
Still more modern became the Powers home when Mr. Powers brought home the first wall paper! The design for that paper is still in possession of the family. It is a delicate scroll, with a bird perched on top, on a background of white ivory satin. Mr. Powers hung the paper himself, and naturally it made the house very attractive.

The home also boasted the first "bought" carpet. Other new things were the window shades painted by Mrs. Powers. The material used was muslin.

CHAPTER XXI

RICHARD J. OGLESBY

DICK, keep close to the people; they are always right, and will never mislead you," said Abraham Lincoln to Richard J. Oglesby.



RICHARD J. OGLESBY

Oglesby followed the advice of the man who in early life was his inspiration, in later life his friend, his confidante, his chief.

He believed in the people and the people believed in him. Thrice they named him their governor, at times when the state needed a real leader.

"From the breaking out of the Mexican war up to the last presidential campaign the people of Illinois have never decided a great public question without taking 'Uncle Dick' Oglesby into their confidence," said a writer in 1899.

"Oglesby is a big man, with a big heart and a big brain, who has always believed in the people," said his old friend, Colonel A. C. Babcock. "The Republican party in Illinois never had a leader who could influence as many votes as Oglesby, and it never had a leader who knew as little about machine politics. Oglesby, in fact, has worked in the blissful belief that such things as party machines do not exist. He has always believed that the people nominate and elect their favorites."

Through all his life Oglesby loved Decatur, the home of his boyhood days and the home of much of his later life. Outside of Lincoln, he has been classed as Macon county's most distinguished citizen. As major-general in the United States army, three times governor of Illinois, a state senator, and United States senator, he had a record such as was made by no other local citizen.

Richard J. Oglesby's life was not one of ease before he finally reached the top. He traveled a stony path, a path of failures, heartaches and disappointments. Yet his discouragements did not daunt him. He believed that some day he would be a success. He had to believe in himself. Left an orphan when a little lad, he lacked the preparation for life which is the right of any boy. He learned early that he must make his own way.

Dick Oglesby's father was Colonel Jacob Oglesby, a prosperous farmer of Oldham county, Ky. The father had been a member of the Kentucky legislature and a colonel of a militia regiment. Dick was born July 25, 1824. Everything had gone well with the family, until in June, 1833, when father, mother, a son and a daughter fell victims to a scourge of cholera which ravished their community. The home was broken up; the family scattered. Six grief stricken children, one of them a boy of eight years, were left. Richard and three sisters were taken to the home of an uncle.

It had been hard to part with father, mother, sister and brother, but there were more bitter tears when the boy had to part with "Uncle Tim," the negro slave, who had been one of the family back to the time of the grandfather. For "Uncle Tim" had to be sold, when the father's property was settled up. Then and there Dick Oglesby became an abolitionist.

"I shall never forget how he looked as he stood on the box ready for sale," said Dick Oglesby in later years in describing the scene. "He was a powerful man, with a manly bearing, a fine face, and a skin as black as ebony. He had always been fond of us children, and I thought almost as much of him as of my father. The tears streamed down his face and he begged my father's brother to buy him, but this could not be done."

Little Dick just couldn't stand it. He rushed up to Uncle Tim.

"Uncle Tim," he cried, "I'm going to work to earn money and when I get enough I'm going to buy you and set you free."

Uncle Tim's face lit up, for a moment, but in a second despair again settled on it.

"Thank you, Marse Dick, but you're a poor orphan and won't nebber be rich 'nuff to buy Uncle Tim," he said hopelessly.

But the little boy didn't forget. The day came when he had the money to buy Uncle Tim and set him free. When he came back from California with plenty of gold Oglesby fulfilled his boyhood promise.

Telling of his meeting then with Uncle Tim, Oglesby said:

"When he caught sight of me he threw back his head, raised his arms and exclaimed:

" 'My God, has the li'l orphan boy lived to buy and set me free!'

"Then he put his arms around me and tried to lift me, as in the old days, but I had grown too large and he had grown too weak."

In 1836 a number of the Oglesbys left Kentucky and located in Decatur, bringing the orphan children of Jacob Oglesby with them. Dick was the particular charge of his "Aunt Judy," wife of Richard Oglesby. This Richard Oglesby became the president of the first board of trustees of the town of Decatur, named in 1836. He also was one of the three men named to let the contract for Decatur's second court house, the brick building erected in 1838. Another uncle of the boy Dick, who came to Decatur, was Willis Oglesby, who had married Mildred Snyder. He did not remain in Decatur many years, but moved to Salem, Ind., taking the boy Dick with him. Dick evidently didn't like it there, and though only fourteen years of age he made the return trip to Decatur by himself, that being his first journey into the world alone.

Of the three sisters who came to Decatur, one died shortly after arrival here. Amanda afterwards became Mrs. Henry Prather and Ophelia became Mrs. J. J. Peddecord.

Dick Oglesby always gratefully remembered his Aunt Judy, who looked after his welfare when he was a lad growing up. He was a harum-scarum, fun-loving boy, full of pranks and mischief, but his beloved foster-mother lived to see the day when he was filling the highest position his state could offer him.

Aunt Judy, left a widow at the death of her husband, Richard Oglesby, went to live with the family of Dr. J. G. Speer. Afterwards she lived for years with the Edmiston McClellan family.

As a boy Dick Oglesby became a leader among his associates, usually in some mischief. "Nat" Krone, one of those boyhood friends, once came in for a good scolding from his mother for "running with that bad Oglesby boy." One of Nat's secret ambitions was to be able to swear like Dick Oglesby, and he was properly punished once for undertaking it.

While growing into manhood Dick Oglesby tried various methods of making a living, but seemed to succeed in none.[1] He learned the carpenter trade, he farmed, he made rope. None proved profitable. His only consolation out of a summer's work in raising hemp, from which he manufactured rope, was the fact that his rope was used in launching the first flat boat which was sent out from Decatur on the Sangamon.[2]

He decided to try the law, and went to Springfield where he studied in the office of Judge Silas Robbins.

The first thing he tackled in the beginning of his law study was Blackstone, but he had not had the necessary educational background and the big words floored him. Up to that time Oglesby had never read a book through in his life.

Judge Robbins tried to help him, by suggesting that he read history along with his study and asked him what he remembered of his history.

"I never read any, Judge," said young Oglesby.

"What, no English history?" queried the judge.

"No," was the reply.

"No American history?" continued the judge.

"No," said Oglesby.

"Well, what have you read?" asked the judge, severely.

"Nothing, Judge, I never read a book through in my life," Oglesby admitted, with a crestfallen air.

"Why, Dick, how in the devil do you ever expect to become a lawyer?" the judge exclaimed.

"Well," said Oglesby, "I know several lawyers who never read anything, who never had read anything, and hadn't any sense either, and I guess I can be a lawyer if they can."

Dick buckled down with his study, however, and some time later presented himself before Judge Breeze for examination.

"We had a jug of cider and a bushel of apples to treat the judges and we all went through," he told afterwards.

After he was admitted to the bar, in 1845, he went to Sullivan to hang out his shingle.

He had a few cases in court, but business wasn't rushing. Soon afterwards he returned to Decatur.

One time Attorney Seth Post offered to take him in on a case in probate court. The fee was to be $30 and Oglesby was to get half.

When the case was called, Oglesby opened the argument. In that speech he covered about everything he knew, except the case before him. The fact was that he didn't know anything about it. When he finished, Judge Emerson, counsel for the opposing side, told him he had made a fool of himself, and tore his arguments to pieces.

Attorney Post then arose to address the court.

"My distinguished colleague has recited the facts so completely that it is unnecessary for me to say anything," he remarked.

The case went to the jury. The verdict was returned. Oglesby and Post had won the case. Oglesby's part of the fee was more money than he had ever owned before!

Oglesby once said:

"The gift of gab seems to be the only gift I have."

For that reason he thought he ought to make a successful lawyer. He soon found out, however, that "gab was only one of the smallest requisites of a lawyer."

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[1] Not even Oglesby's youthful love affairs were successful. According to a story told, Oglesby one time back in the '40s was courting a handsome young miss, when a Springfield fellow happened along and decided he wanted the same girl. The Springfield man wore a boiled shirt, and was all "dressed up". Oglesby had only his homespun garments. Evidently looks counted with the girl, for she took the Springfield man. Oglesby bemoaned the fact that it "was always his luck to get a girl sparked up to the marrying point and then some other fellow came along and got her".

[2] Dick Oglesby told Mrs. George W. Powers one day, when speaking of his summer's work, that he "had raised enough hemp to make a good rope and had a mind to hang himself with it".

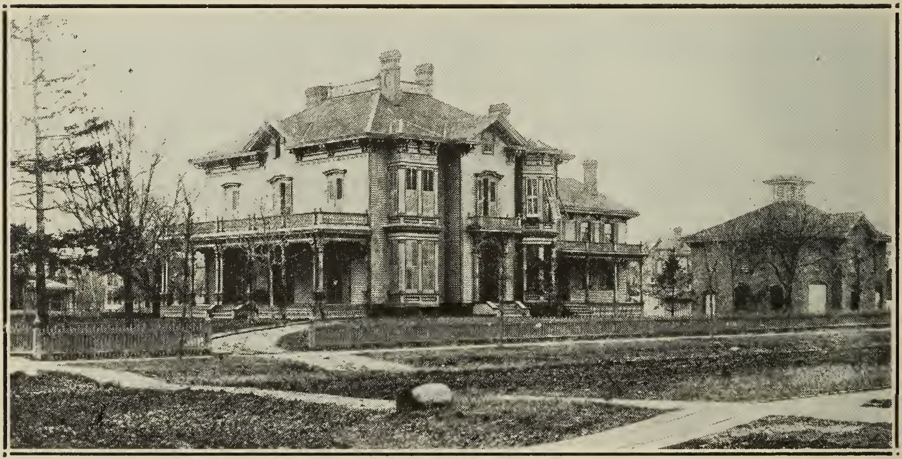

Photo by J. E. Bering.

DECATUR HOUSE BUILT BY R. J. OGLESBY

The original Oglesby home can be seen at the right, adjoining the main house.

CHAPTER XXII

RICHARD J. OGLESBY

(Concluded)

WHEN war was declared with Mexico, Richard J. Oglesby enlisted as a private in Company C of the 4th Illinois Infantry, in charge of Colonel E. D. Baker. He was elected second lieutenant, and made a good record in the army.

At the close of the war he attended law school in Louisiana, Ky., for three months, and received his diploma. Then he came back to Decatur and became a member of the Macon county bar.

Soon came the exciting days of the gold rush to California. The lure of the west couldn't be resisted. He joined a party of men and soon was off to seek adventure and fortune. For ninety-five days the party traveled over plains and mountains to reach the fields of gold. Oglesby drove a six mule team all the way from St. Joseph, Mo., to Sacramento on that trip.

Forty-five hundred dollars was the sum which Oglesby brought back to Decatur with him on his return in two or three years from the west. Part of this money he invested in land, adding to the holdings he had secured from the land warrant he received as a soldier in the war with Mexico. He purchased land to the northwest of the town, and laid it out in town lots.

In naming the streets of Oglesby addition he remembered the source from which his money had come. Hence we have Eldorado street. Cerro Gordo street was named for the battle of Cerro Gordo in the War with Mexico, a battle in which he had participated.

Oglesby's first venture into politics was when he became a candidate and was elected as a presidential elector on the Whig ticket. In 1853 he became a law partner of Sheridan Wait.

Still he was not satisfied. Now that he was well situated financially, Oglesby decided to travel for a time, fulfilling a desire to tour Europe. He left in April, 1856, for that continent. Before he returned to Decatur twenty months later, he had extended his travels through Asia and down into Egypt. His tour of the Holy Land aroused his interest in the Bible, and on the peak of Mt. Sinai he committed to memory the Ten Commandments.

On his return to Decatur in December, 1857, his tales of his travels added to his popularity. He came into great demand as a speaker. The trip had been of great value to him. He had much to tell and he knew how to tell it. A tour of foreign lands in those days was something very much out of the ordinary. Every one wanted to hear of the countries he had visited and the experiences he had had. Through the many talks which Oglesby gave on his travels was developed the eloquence which served him so well in later years.

In 1860 Oglesby was elected to the state senate, receiving a majority of 240 votes. He served one session in the senate. Then came the outbreak of the Civil War, and Oglesby resigned the senatorship to become colonel of the Eighth Illinois Regiment, the appointment coming from Governor Yates.

Two companies to join this regiment were organized in Decatur within twenty-four hours.

The regiment was stationed in or near Cairo for most of the term for which it was enlisted, but after it was mustered out in July, 1861, most of the soldiers reenlisted at once to serve for "three years or for the war." Colonel Oglesby was in command until April 1, 1862, when he was promoted to Brigadier-General. The promotion was in recognition of his valor at the battle of Fort Donelson.

While participating in the battle of Corinth General Oglesby was shot through the lung, and for weeks no hopes were given for his recovery. Under the skillful care of Dr. S. T. Trowbridge, surgeon of the Eighth Regiment, he pulled through, but his return to health was a long and slow process.

In November, 1862, Oglesby was commissioned Major General, and in the spring of 1863 he was assigned to the Sixteenth Army corps. He was still suffering, however, from the bullet he still carried and he feared he would be unable to perform the duties of the position. Accordingly he handed in his resignation in July, 1863, but General Grant refused to accept the resignation. Grant then detailed Oglesby to court martial duty in Washington, and Oglesby remained in that city until May, 1864, when he resigned to become candidate for governor of Illinois.

Oglesby was considered the logical man to head Illinois at that time. It was felt that it was important that the state have a governor who would support Lincoln. The campaign was a lively and a bitter one, but Oglesby was elected. It is remembered that in his campaign speeches, Oglesby upheld Lincoln and predicted that the time would come when Lincoln would be worshipped by the entire world. Oglesby was quietly sworn into office on Jan. 17, 1865. A day had previously been set for inaugural ceremonies, but Oglesby had been crushed by the loss of his little five year old son, Dickie, who had died from diphtheria the day before the time set for the inauguration and it had been postponed.

The vital topic of interest at the time Oglesby became governor was the thirteenth amendment to the constitution, prohibiting slavery in the United States and its territories.

"Let Illinois be the first to ratify," said Oglesby when Congress passed the amendment.

Illinois heeded the governor's wishes, and was the first state to approve the action prohibiting slavery.

Governor Oglesby, who had stood by Lincoln during the strenuous days of the Civil war, stood by his bedside when the great leader gave up his life, the victim of the assassin's bullet.

Oglesby had just arrived in Washington and had been invited by President and Mrs. Lincoln to attend the theater with them that evening. Oglesby, tired from his journey, asked to be excused, but made an appointment to see the president the next morning.

Later in the evening came the startling news. The President had been shot. Oglesby rushed to the bedside of the stricken man. There he remained until the end. Words could not describe his grief.

Later Oglesby was made the president of a National Memorial association to erect a monument to Lincoln, for which $200,000 was raised. When that monument, now a world shrine, was dedicated in Springfield, Oct. 15, 1874, Oglesby delivered the oration.

Among those present on that occasion was President Ulysses S. Grant.

During Oglesby's term as governor many important laws were passed. One was the location of the Illinois Agricultural and Industrial college at Urbana. It was during his administration that $450,000 was appropriated to begin the work of erecting the $3,000,000 state house at Springfield.

After he retired from office Oglesby returned to Decatur, remaining the four years until he was again called to service. He was elected governor for the second time, and was inaugurated Jan. 13, 1873, but a few days afterward was elected as United States senator, and resigned as governor to accept the senatorship. During the six years he was in the senate he spent most of his time in Washington, but he always kept his home in Decatur open.

When his service in the senate ended, he again retired, this time for a period of fourteen years. Then once more his state called him, and in 1884 he was again nominated and elected as governor. He was inaugurated on Jan. 30, 1885. When he left the governor's mansion in Springfield, Jan. 1, 1889, after the close of his third term as governor, he took up his residence at Elkhart, in Logan county. His home was called Oglehurst, and there he lived until his death on April 24, 1899. His death was caused by concussion of the brain, brought on by a fall in which his head was struck. He is buried at Oglehurst. Just two weeks before he died he visited in Decatur.

Governor Oglesby was twice married. His first wife, to whom he was married in 1859, was Miss Anna E. White. She died in the governor's mansion at Springfield, June 16, 1868, during the last year of her husband's first term as governor. She was brought to Decatur for burial. Beside her in Greenwood cemetery lie two of their children, who died in childhood. Two others grew to womanhood and manhood.

In 1873 Governor Oglesby married Mrs. Emma Gillett Keyes of Logan county. They became the parents of four children.

The Oglesby home in Decatur was in the 400 block West William street. For some years they occupied the original house which stood on the place. This was the home to which General Oglesby was brought after he had been wounded at the battle of Corinth.

Afterwards, Governor Oglesby erected a beautiful and spacious new residence, now numbered 421 West William street, and the old house, which adjoined it, was used for kitchen and servants' quarters. Governor Oglesby sold the property to J. E. Bering. The original Oglesby home was torn down after Wilson Bering bought the property from his father in 1905.

Today, the house is the home of Mr. and Mrs. Frank L. Evans.

In Decatur Oglesby's name is perpetuated in the Oglesby school and Oglesby street. In 1924, the one-hundredth anniversary year of Oglesby's birth, a tulip tree was planted at the Oglesby school as a memorial to him.

CHAPTER XXIII

BLACK HAWK AND MEXICAN WARS

IN patriotism Macon county ever has stood at the front. When our country has needed soldiers, our men have been quick to volunteer, ready to give up their lives if necessary. In every war Macon county has a record of which it may be proud. It has given to the service of the state and country men of all ranks, from private to general.

When Black Hawk, the Sac chief, returned, in 1832, with his followers to Illinois, thus violating the treaty signed the previous year, wherein he agreed to relinquish all claim to lands on the east side of the Mississippi, Governor John Reynolds called for volunteers to repel the invasion.

Eighteen hundred men were mustered into service. Among them was a company from Macon county under Captain James Johnson.

The company was in the battalion led by Major Stillman, and participated in the deplorable action known as Stillman's defeat, but the blame for that defeat rested upon Major Stillman, who refused to acknowledge the authority of General Whiteside and to cooperate in the plan of campaign. One Macon county soldier, James Milton, lost his life in that battle.

Isaac C. Pugh, who entered this war as first lieutenant, came home as the captain of the company. James Johnson, who went in as captain, became colonel of the Fifth regiment.

Here is a copy of the muster roll of the company from Macon county engaged in the war (names taken from Adjutant-General's report):

"Muster roll of Captain Johnson's company of mounted volunteers, belonging to the Fifth regiment, commanded by James Johnson, of the brigade of mounted volunteers of Illinois militia, commanded by Brigadier-General Samuel Whiteside. Mustered out of service of United States at mouth of Fox river, the state of Illinois, on the 27th day of May, 1832; distance, miles, 150, from place of enrollment.

"(The date of enlistment of all was April 24, 1832; and the term was 35 days).

James Johnson captain, promoted to colonel 16 May, 1832.
William Warnick, first lieutenant, absent with leave
I. C. Pugh, second lieutenant, promoted to captain 16 May, 1832.
J. D. Wright, first sergeant, absent on extra duty.
James A. Ward, second sergeant, promoted to second lieutenant.
Walter Bowles, third sergeant, absent with leave.
Joseph Hanks, fourth sergeant.
Henry M. Gorin, first corporal.
S. R. Shepard, second corporal.
George Coppenbarger, third corporal, absent with leave.
James Milton, fourth corporal, killed in battle.
Asher Simpson, private.
A. W. Bell, private.
Abraham Black, private.
Daniel McCall, private
D. H. Stewart, private, absent on extra duty.
Elisha Butler, private, absent with leave.
G. D. Smallwood, private.
John Hanks, private.
Jacob Lane, private, absent on extra duty.
John Henderson, private, absent with leave.
James Querry, private.
James Miller, private.
John Manley, private.
James Ennis, private, absent with leave.
John Clifton, private, absent with leave.
Jesse Dickey, private, wounded in battle.
John Williams, private, absent with leave.
John Murphy, private.
Jacob Black, absent with leave.
James Herrod, private, absent with leave.
Kinian Ingram, private, absent with leave.
Obediah Hooper, private, absent with leave.
Robert Smith, private.
S. B. Dewees, private.
Sam Miller, private.
Lam Troxel, private.
Thomas Davenport, private, absent with leave.
William Hanks, private, absent with leave.
William Adams, private, absent with leave.
William Miller, private.
William Hooper, private, absent with leave.
William Cox, private, absent with leave.
Josiah Clifton, private, absent with leave.

"I certify, on honor, that the muster roll exhibits the true state of the company of mounted volunteers under my command, of the Illinois militia, of the brigade of mounted volunteers under the command of Brigadier General Samuel Whiteside on this day, and that the remarks set opposite the names of the men, are accurate and just.

"Signed Fox River, Ill., this the 27th day of May, 1832.

"I. C. Pugh, captain,
"Commanding the company."

RANGERS

Macon county also sent out a company of Rangers, commanded by Captain William Warnick. Isaac Pugh was first lieutenant and

Elisha Freeman second lieutenant. They were organized for the purpose of protecting the frontier counties.[1]

The fifty men who made up the company of Rangers enlisted for a period of sixty days, and furnished their own ammunition, arms, horses and provisions. They left Decatur on June 4, 1832, going first to the present site of Monticello, Ill., where they went into camp. Hearing that the Kickapoo braves had left their village near the head of the Big Vermilion to go to the aid of Black Hawk, leaving their squaws, children and old men behind, the Rangers started for the village, finding, however, that it had been deserted entirely three days before.

Members of Captain Warnick's company of Rangers were as follows:

Captain—William Warnick.
First Lieutenant—Isaac C. Pugh.
Second Lieutenant—E. Freeman.
Sergeants—F. G. Paine, J. H. Johnson, A. M. Wilson, R. Law.
Corporals—J. Smith, A. Travis, J. Brown, J. Miller.
Privates—
A. Arnold.
Thomas Alsup.
N. Burrell
M. Brown.
E. Butler.
T. G. D. Church.
H. Cunningham.
J. Cunningham.
J. Davis.
J. Edwards.
J. Farris.
A. Hall.
D. Howell
W. Hooper
A. Hendline.
D. Hall.
L. Ingram.
R. Johnson.
L. Jackson.
J. Lowry.
S. Mounce.
J. H. McMennamy.
D. Newcomb.
T. Owen.
M. Paine.
Mason Paine.
J. A. Piatt.
A. W. Smith.
S. Sinnett.
J. Stevens.
Benjamin Slatten.
F. Travis.
S. Widick.
William Ward.
T. F. Wilson.
James Warnick.
J. Warnick.
J. Walker.
R. Wheeler.

When the period of their enlistment was up, the company returned home, but was asked to be in readiness for call to frontier service. No further trouble arising, the men received their discharge, 113 days after their enlistment, and each man was given $52 and a land warrant for 160 acres of land.

WAR WITH MEXICO

Again came the call to Macon county for volunteers, when war was declared with Mexico in May, 1846. Company C consisting of seventy-eight men was organized.[2]

When the company reached Springfield, it was found that the three regiments, to which Illinois was entitled, were already full. Through the influence of Congressman O. B. Ficklin of Illinois, E. D. Baker was given permission by President Polk to raise a Fourth regiment from Illinois. The Macon county men became a part of this regiment. Mr. Baker was made colonel, John Moore lieutenant colonel, and Thomas L. Harris major of the regiment.

Isaac C. Pugh was made captain of Company C, Richard J. Oglesby was first lieutenant, and A. Froman and John P. Post second lieutenants. Other officers and the privates enlisted in the company were as follows (names taken from Adjutant General report):

Sergeants—
Stephen Osborn.
Benjamin F. Oglesby.
Samuel K. Herrell.
James Rea.

Corporals—
John B. Travis.
John B. Case.
William J. Usrey.

Privates—
John Atwood.
R. B. Barnwell.
David Bailor.
George M. Braden.
William W. Chapman.
George Carver.
Dial Davis.
Ambrose Greenfield.
Israel Horner.
William D. B. Henry.
Henry Lord.
Alsa B. Lee.
Josiah Martin.
Christian Mair.
Abram Shepperd.
William E. See.
James R. Turner.
Finis E. Travis.
Charles Ause.
Jesse Butler.
Madison Bradshaw.
George W. Church.
Laban Chambers.
William Dean.
James Freeman.
David Huffman
Moses M. Henry.
James A. Lourie.
Thomas Lord.
Benjamin Martin.
William McDaniel.
Etherage Rice.
Jason Sprague.
Daniel Spangler.
James Turner.
Lewis Ward.
Robert Warnick.
John W. White.

Transferred.
Joel Seth Post (transferred to Field and Staff).

Discharged.

Sergeants—
George W. Galbreath (disability).
John B. Brown (disability).
Lawrence S. Helm (disability).

Privates—
Miles Bosworth (disability).
Amos Botkin (disability).
James Greenfield (disability).
J. H. Hollingsworth (disability).
William Hanks.
James Ledbetter (disability)
George I. Malson (disability).
Harvey Martin (disability).
William Nesbitt (disability).
Dorus Stevens (disability).
Robert Stewart (disability).
John D. Travis (disability).
William R. Wheeler (disability).
Bazel E. Wells (disability).

Died.

Corporals—
L. Martin Bennett.
George E. Nelson.

Privates—
Pomeroy T. Bebee.
John M. Dickey.
David Howell.
Samuel Reece.
James A. Shepperd.
Temple Souther.
Bazel B. White.
Charles W. Dillow.
William P. Davidson
James C. Malson.
William P. Robinson.
John Saunders.
William Wheeler.

SERVICE

Company C left Decatur for Springfield about the middle of June, 1846. The regiment was formed there and then went into training at Jefferson Barracks, Mo. After being mustered into service the regiment left the latter part of July for New Orleans, and thence to Brazos, Santiago Bay, four miles north of the mouth of the Rio Grande. Eight miles up the river occurred the first death in the company, that of Sergeant George Galbreath.

The members of the burial squad on their return to camp after burying the body of Sergeant Galbreath, went on board a steamer nearby to quiet a disturbance, but they were overpowered, and one man, Charles Dillow, was killed and several were injured in the encounter. Colonel Baker suffered a rapier thrust through the mouth and neck, Lieutenant Post sustained a breast wound, and R. H. Stewart was bayoneted in the thigh.

The last words of Private Dillow were:

"If I have got to go, the road to heaven is just as near from here as from Macon county."

The company later assisted in bombarding Vera Cruz, which surrendered on March 29, 1847, and took part in the battle with Santa Anna at the mountain pass of Cerro Gordo on April 18. Two of the men of Company C, J. C. Malson and George Nelson, were killed in this battle.

Company C was at the head of the brigade and captured the $25,000 in silver and the cork leg, which Santa Anna had left in his carriage, when he attempted to escape. This leg, by the way, is one of the valued war relics now kept in the Centennial memorial building in Springfield.

The company returned home, after the time of enlistment had expired, coming via New Orleans and St. Louis, and reaching Decatur about June 1, 1847. With the returning soldiers was the banner they had received from the citizens on their departure a year before.

It was a day of rejoicing in Decatur when the boys came home. Enthusiasm ran high, and a grand barbecue was held to honor the heroes.[3]

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[1] At the time of the Black Hawk war all sorts of rumors floated about to the effect that the Indians were coming.

Sheriff Warnick, two of his sons and his hired man were away serving in the war. Mrs. Warnick was frightened at the stories of possible Indian massacres, and, taking her eight year old boy Robert, she hurried across the fields to the home of Joseph Austin.

Joseph Austin at that time was old and feeble, but when Mrs. Warnick confided her fears to him, he cracked his big blacksnake whip and emphatically and loudly declared:

"I'll whip every Indian that comes down the Sangamon river."

With such protection assured, the frightened woman and her son felt entirely safe.

[2] An interesting relic is the silk flag which was carried by Company C in the Mexican war. It is the property of Frank Curtis, whose mother, Mrs. I. B. Curtis, helped to make it. The flag is 8 by 12 feet in size. The flag was made by a group of women, and was presented on June 7, 1846, to Company C, in front of the old brick court house on Lincoln square. Mrs. Curtis, then Jane Butler, made the presentation, and the flag was received on behalf of the company by Lt. R. J. Oglesby. The flag was unfurled first at Vera Cruz. After the war it was given to Anderson Froman, who kept it as long as he lived. Afterwards his widow preserved it. It finally was given to Mrs. Curtis because she had helped to make it. Colonel Anderson Froman lost his life while leading the 116th regiment in the Civil War.

[3] Old Black Ben, the first negro in Macon county, is believed to have been the one who superintended the roasting of the ox for the barbecue. A pit was dug in the ground, and fire kindled therein, over which the ox was roasted.

CHAPTER XXIV

EARLY SETTLEMENTS

LITTLE towns and villages dot Macon county today. So it was within a few years after the organization of the county, but with the exception of Decatur the villages of today are not the ones of yesterday. It is the second crop of towns we now have. The first have vanished. Some of them, we must admit, never existed except on paper.

It was the coming of the railroads, of course, that changed the map of the county. Towns that were missed by the roads were doomed. New towns along the lines of the railroads sprang up. What would have been the fate of the little village of Decatur if the first survey for the Illinois Central railroad, six miles west of Decatur, had been ultimately chosen?

Outside of Decatur Mt. Zion is the only very early settlement which has had a continued existence. Though the church there was organized in 1830 and became the center of the community interest, the village was not laid out until 1860.

TOWNS LAID OUT

Within seven years after Decatur came into existence, two other towns were laid out in the county. They were Murfreesboro and Madison, the former in the southeast corner of Whitmore township and the latter in the north part of Blue Mound township. Both were surveyed and platted in 1836 by Benjamin R. Austin, who had surveyed and platted Decatur.

Murfreesboro was laid out by William Dickey, and at the time was on a main line of travel. It had a bright outlook and expectations were that it would excel Decatur. Efforts were made to make it the county seat. The town was near the old Lorton trading house and was a natural trade center as there were many settlers in that vicinity. The town, beautifully located, was near a ford of the river. Saw mill, grist mill, and store were started, homes were built. Later a brick yard was established.

To mark the public square of the town stones were set at each of the out corners and a rock was placed at the northwest corner. Streets in the new town were called Pleasant, Springfield, College, Jefferson and Chicago. Murfreesboro was located in the Southeast quarter of the southeast quarter of Section 7, Township 17 North, Range 4 East.

Today Murfreesboro, the town that was expected to become the most thriving city of the county, is only a memory.

Madison laid out by Thomas Moffett, arose to the distinction of having four or five houses and a store. Only the Madison church and schoolhouse stand today to perpetuate the name.

Though on much traveled roads at first, the two towns were left by the wayside when new roads were established and selected for stage routes, and they met their final defeat when the railroads passed them by.

Marion and Franklin were two other towns laid out in 1836 which never materialized into villages, though Franklin boasted several houses, and no doubt a tavern, as it was on the direct line from Decatur to Pekin.

Newburg, once a prosperous little village of 150 people, was platted in 1854 by William Dickey. For some time it was the only village between Decatur and Monticello, and was a place of some importance. With the establishment of Argenta one mile west, on the line of the railroad, Newburg was abandoned eventually. Only a cluster of old wrecks of houses now remains of what was once a picturesque and interesting settlement.

William Martin, who bought the Draper land in Whitmore township about 1850, laid out the town of Martinsburg in the section south of Murfreesboro, but it also came to nothing. A saw mill, a trading house, a tile works, and a few residences were all the town could ever boast. Mr. Martin built the tile works, which he afterwards sold to his son-in-law, Dr. H. C. Johns.

"Hell's Half Acre" was the name applied to the notorious village of West Danville, better known as Dantown, which was laid out in 1855 by County Surveyor I. B. R. Sherrick for Daniel Conkling. Conkling established a distillery, store and saloon there, and the place was frequented by the wilder element of the community. Drinking, fighting, horse racing, gambling, gave the town a reputation of recklessness and

DANTOWN DISTILLERY

lawlessness. Conkling was the dominating figure of the village and his physical bigness, as well as his place as a leader in the community, commanded the respect of his patrons.

The revenue tax placed on whisky during the Civil war, lack of railroad service, the final coming of local option, the passing away of Dan Conkling, all had their part in bringing about the demise of Dantown. The distillery was last owned and operated by V. D. Ross. It still stands, with some of its equipment, as a reminder of the old days, but the town is gone. A modern farm dwelling across the road from the staunch old building, where whisky was made, now is the only home on the site of the once riotous village.

A settlement that almost became a village in the early days was that known as Cross Roads, at the point where the Shelbyville road crossed the Springfield-Paris state road several miles south of Decatur. At one time it was expected that this settlement would surpass Decatur, having an advantageous location at the point of intersection of two important highways. The place was not laid out for a town, however.

For some years after the first pioneer came to Macon county, settlers established their homes mostly at the edge of the timber. Building homes out on the prairie would have been considered very foolish, indeed. But in 1834 two men did venture out on the prairie. They were Robert Smith and William Cox. Others speculated as to their probable fate.

But contrary to all expectations the two men, who had been so hazardous, met with success. Their example inspired others, and one by one homes began to appear here and there out in the big open spaces on land once scorned. Much of the prairie was too swampy to be cultivated, but the high spots were chosen. This spreading out on the prairies was really the commencement of the development of the land.

At the end of ten years, land could still be had at $1.25 an acre, and was being taken up fast. Homes began to improve. Log cabins were replaced by better ones, and eventually by frame houses after saw mills had been established, and building material was being cut. Some of the early better class houses were weatherboarded and finished with walnut.

After a time it was discovered that Illinois mud would make brick, and then numerous houses with brick foundations and brick walls began to appear Truly, Macon county was showing progress.

CHAPTER XXV

CAMP MEETINGS

THE groves were God's first temples." The words of the poet were true in Macon county. Many of the first religious services were held in groves, with nothing but grass for carpet and only the broad canopy of heaven for a roof. It was the camp meeting of the early days which served not only the religious need of the people but the social need as well.

The camp meetings held in the summer time were the big events of the year in the lives of the pioneer residents. To a large extent the camp meeting grounds were the sites of future churches. There are in the country near Decatur today a number of churches at points where camp meetings were held in early times. Among them are Boiling Springs, northwest of town, and North Fork, six miles east. Mt. Gilead, south of the city, later was moved to Elwin.

One of the earliest camp meetings was held on Stevens creek, and afterward developed into the first church organization, though it was moved to Decatur and became the First Methodist church. The Sharon church, northwest of Decatur, might also be called an outgrowth of this camp meeting. Settlers in the neighborhood continued to worship in the Bagdad school house, after the church organization moved its services to Decatur. The school was later moved to Sunnyside, and the present Sharon church building was erected in 1872.

The Cumberland Presbyterians established several permanent camp grounds in the county. They were at Mt. Zion, Bethlehem, North Fork and Friend's Creek. A camp ground was established by the Methodists at Mt. Gilead.

To these permanent camp grounds people came from miles around year after year. They were fed and lodged, and their horses were provided with grain and pasturage. Hospitality was not imposed on in those days. There were no "Weary Willies."

The camp meeting often was the only occasion which gave friends opportunity to meet in the course of a year. Old acquaintances were renewed, and new friendships were formed. Men talked about their crops, the chances for development of the country, political news, if they had any. Women brought their fancy work, taught each other new stitches, new designs, made up quilt patches, exchanged flower and garden seeds. One must hear all about John and Mary and Will and Nancy. It was the place to hear the news, often news that had been accumulating for a year.

So everybody came. If they did not come to worship they came anyhow, for every one else was there. Some, of course, came from mere curiosity. But they came.

The North Fork camp ground was one of the favorites. A more permanent shelter was provided there than was found at some of the other grounds.

Sites for camp grounds were chosen which were easy of access, and where there was plenty of shade, ample water supply, and good drainage. After a site had been chosen, the ground was cleared of brush. Then a speaker's stand was erected, seats were made, shacks and tents put up, and lights provided.

When everything was in readiness the camp was dedicated. Usually services were held before breakfast, again from 10 to 12, also in the afternoon and at night. The night meeting was the big gathering. Those who could not possibly be there for the day services were sure to come for the night meetings.

For fifty years camp meetings were entirely of a religious nature. In the early days particularly the services were extremely emotional. Worshippers experienced their periods of repentance, of sorrow and of joy, and they expressed their feelings with prayers and tears and shouts and songs. Preachers denounced wickedness in no uncertain terms and listeners were swayed by the vivid pictures of eternal damnation and everlasting happiness.

With the years, the attendance increased, and the time came when auditoriums seating thousands of people were erected. Around such auditoriums stood streets of tents for lodging the campers.

OAKLAND PARK CAMP

The last big camp in Macon county was the Oakland park camp, on the present site of the James Millikin university. However, this was more on the order of a chautauqua than a camp meeting of religious nature. The camp ground was used for years for big gatherings of various kinds.

For some time this land was rented out as a hog pasture. Finally in 1884 the Citizens Railway company leased the land for a term of years, and gave it the name of Oakland park. That name in the next few years became famous as the site of the first chautauqua ever held in this part of the country, and as the place for holding the largest camp meetings ever known here.

A pavilion was erected with seats for 8,000 or more people. It was made of canvas. A huge dining hall, in which 500 persons could be accommodated at one time, was built. People came for miles and miles to attend camp there. Decatur people could reach the park via the horse car line which was extended to the Wabash tracks, and for hours at a time it would be overloaded with passengers.

Sundays always were the biggest days. It was estimated that 30,000 people were present on the day the camp had its largest attendance.

Camp meetings usually lasted for ten days at this camp, and music, addresses and other features of entertainment made up the programs.

Albert F. Smith, manager of the Oakland park camp, was the leading Prohibitionist of the day in this section, and for ten years he conducted the national prohibition encampments at Oakland park. Such widely known temperance speakers as John B. Finch of Nebraska, George W. Bain of Kentucky, John B. Gough of Maine, John P. St. John of Kansas, Mrs. Helen Gaugher, and John Sobieski, the Polish patriot, thrilled the thousands of visitors who gathered to hear them.

Mr. Smith was a remarkable man in many ways, yet withal so quiet and unobtrusive that the people of his generation did not realize his great influence. He was an indefatigable worker, a lawyer of ability, a successful newspaper editor, resourceful in a business way. The latter is indicated by his successful management of the encampment year after year without any financial backing but what his own efforts brought. For a number of years he published a temperance

ENTRANCE TO OAKLAND PARK

newspaper, called the Illinois State Sentinel. Belittling of his work by anti-prohibitionists failed to daunt him.

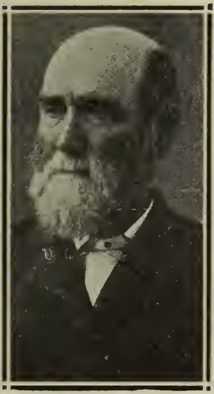
Besides the camp meetings, other big gatherings were held at the camp occasionally. Once, in 1894, the annual national meeting of the Dunkard church was held at Oakland park. It brought thousands to the park.

It was only a step from the camp meetings held by Albert F. Smith to the chautauqua, which became popular a few years later. Those meetings served the same place in the lives of the people as do the chautauquas of today.

CHAPTER XXVI

EARLY BUILDERS

EDWARD O. Smith came west to "grow up with the country." He not only did so, but he helped the country to grow up. He has been called the "builder of Decatur."


EDWARD O. SMITH

He was a builder in a material way, but he was more than that—he was a molder of the destiny of the city. As a contractor, he erected many of Decatur's business and residence structures. As a civic leader, he gave the city keen, constructive service. He was resourceful and courageous. He foresaw the future of Decatur and he did a big part in making that future. As member of the state constitutional convention, as state senator, as mayor of Decatur, he served his state, his district, his city.

The span of his life covered much more than that of the ordinary man. Life in city and village, in legislative halls, in deserts, from east to west in this country, in foreign lands, was his.

Edward O. Smith was born in Montgomery county, Md., April 15, 1817. When still a young lad, he went to Washington, D. C., where he was employed for two years, and where he gained much practical political knowledge.

With $19—all the capital he had—in his pockets, and with all his worldly effects in a bundle across his shoulders, he started out on foot, at the age of seventeen, for the great west.

When he reached Springfield, O., in the course of his journey, he stopped for a time and learned the carpenter's trade. After a time, however, because of throat trouble he decided to come farther west, to the prairies. He stopped for a while in Montezuma, Ind., and also in Terre Haute, Ind., then again he resumed his westward way. He finally reached Decatur. That was in May, 1837. By that time the young man was twenty years old. Here he stayed.

Decatur was not long in recognizing his integrity and his ability as a contractor. For the next twenty years he was a busy man. Building after building he erected. He succeeded in making money, and he invested it in land, which he improved with more buildings.

Mr. Smith boarded at the Macon hotel, and there he met Miss Harriet Krone, daughter of the hotel keeper. He and Miss Krone were married in 1843. Mr. and Mrs. Smith became the parents of four sons and six daughters, all of whom grew to manhood and womanhood. Mrs. Smith was a splendid helpmeet, and was a woman of good business sense. When her husband was absent in California, she carried on his business here. Mrs. Smith died Jan. 16, 1867. Mr. Smith married a second time, on April 15, 1869, the second wife having been Mrs. Catherine Hillman of Elmwood, Ill.

In 1847 Mr. Smith was elected to the Illinois constitutional convention, and took an active part in drafting the new constitution. In 1848 he was elected state senator, being the candidate of the Whig party.

One of his first acts as senator was to make effort to secure federal donations of public lands for the construction of the Illinois Central and Northern Cross railroads. He succeeded as far as the Illinois Central was concerned, and land was donated to that road. He was instrumental in securing other railroads, including the Decatur and East St. Louis (now St. Louis branch of the Wabash) and served as a director of that road.

If it had not been for E. O. Smith, the Illinois Central would have missed Decatur. The route as first surveyed was six miles west of the city. That route had been considered the shorter and better route. Mr. Smith got busy, and through his efforts the route was changed to come through Decatur.

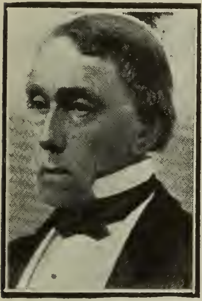
Mr. Smith built Decatur's first opera house. Many theatrical stars appeared in Decatur during the regime of the Smith Opera House.

Mr. Smith made several overland trips to California in the days when a trip to the west meant thrills and adventures. The first was in 1852. The second trip was in 1858 at the time of the business depression in Decatur. This journey was made by way of New Mexico and Arizona, and was a most hazardous undertaking. The party was attacked by Indians a number of times and had other narrow escapes from death. One time they traveled 86 miles without water. Mr. Smith was away from Decatur three years on this trip. When he returned in 1861 he was elected mayor of the city, and held that office during part of the critical Civil war period.

In 1870 Mr. Smith moved to California and located in San Jose. He was soon recognized in the western state as a man who accomplished things, and he had the honor of being elected to the constitutional convention of that state. In 1889 he was able to realize a desire he had long held, that of taking a trip to Europe. Mr. Smith visited Decatur a number of times after he located in the west, but never came back to make his home. He died suddenly of heart disease on March 8, 1892.

DR. J. T. B. STAPP

Dr. James Thomas Burbridge Stapp was another of Decatur's builders, though of a later date than Mr. Smith. He has been referred to as Decatur's first real capitalist. When he came here in 1855 he brought with him $20,000 in cash.



DR. J. T. B. STAPP

Bringing such a sum of money to a country that was almost dollarless, Dr. Stapp was received as a man of importance. That amount of money looked bigger then to Decatur than a million dollars would look today.

Dr. Stapp was an aristocrat. He was born in Woodford county, Ky., in the heart of the blue grass country. The family moved to Kaskaskia when Dr. Stapp was only twelve years old. While still in his teens the young man received an appointment as clerk in the state auditor's office at Vandalia, and he held that position for several years.

During the Black Hawk war Dr. Stapp was aide-de-camp to General Reynolds. It was through the acquaintance made then that he was given the appointment as state auditor. He was afterwards elected twice to that same position.

He resigned as state auditor to become cashier of the State bank of Illinois. When the time came that the affairs of that institution had to be wound up, it was necessary for Dr. Stapp to transfer a wagon load of silver to St. Louis. Nothing daunted by the task, he loaded the silver on a wagon and made the trip with only a pistol for defense.

In the Mexican war Dr. Stapp was adjutant of the Third Illinois infantry. He received an appointment as receiver of the United States land office at Vandalia from President Taylor and served in that office under Presidents Taylor, Fillmore and Pierce, resigning in 1855 to come to Decatur.

When Dr. Stapp first saw Decatur he did not like it, and he said so.

"If you don't like it, why don't you go somewhere else?" asked some one.

"I can do better than that," replied Dr. Stapp. "I can stay here and help make Decatur better."

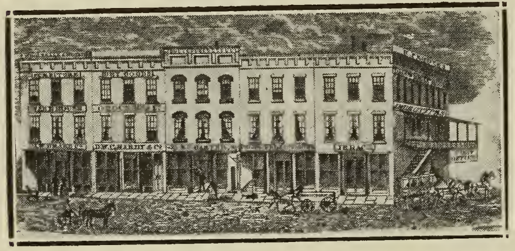
That is just what he did.

Dr. Stapp bought the Henry Prather residence at Franklin and William streets, which was about the handsomest house in Decatur at that time. Two sculptured lions, bought at the Crystal palace in New York in 1866, guarded the entrance to the home for many years.

Those lions served more purposes than one. They were often used in giving directions. They even aided the postman. One time a letter came to Decatur addressed to a certain person at "Mrs. McGinnis' boarding house, two blocks east of where the lions are." The letter reached its destination.

The lions have remained with us until this day, although now they are reposing in front of the Harkrader place on Route 2, west side, about seven miles north of Decatur.

Dr. Stapp and E. O. Smith built Stapp's Row, a block of five store buildings on South Park street. They were three stories high, and were the best and handsomest business buildings in Decatur up to that time.


STAPP'S ROW

One night Dr. Stapp and J. R. Gorin left a billiard game to go to a revival meeting held by Rev. Levi C. Pitner, pastor of the First Methodist church. Dr. Stapp, who was converted at that revival meeting, afterwards gave $5,000 toward the erection of a new building for the Franklin street Methodist church, then using a frame building on Franklin street. The gift was made on condition that J. J. Peddecord give half as much.

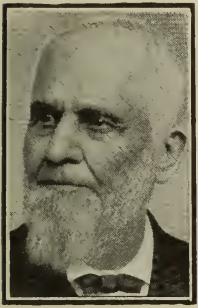
The new chapel was built at Eldorado and Franklin streets, northeast corner, and in honor of the generous donor was called Stapp's chapel for many years. After the congregation, now called the Grace Methodist church, erected a new building on North Main street, the old chapel was sold to the Masons.

Dr. Stapp was a delightful man to meet. He was always the gentleman, and he had a keen and ready mind. He had once studied medicine, but he never practiced the profession. When Dr. Stapp passed away in 1882, Decatur felt that it had lost a real citizen.

CHAPTER XXVII

SOME BUSY CITIZENS

ONE of Decatur's well known women had the distinction of being one of the very earliest residents of the city of Chicago, and her picture has been displayed in that city for years for that reason. The name of the Decatur man she married was inscribed in the cornerstone of the water tower erected in Chicago in the '60s. The two Decatur people so honored in the city by the lake were Mr. and Mrs. Jerome R. Gorin, for years leading citizens of Decatur.



JEROME R. GORIN

Mrs. Gorin lived in Chicago from 1832 to 1838, when it was but a small huddle of houses. Her name was Eleanor Fawcett, and she was the stepdaughter of the pioneer missionary, Rev. Jesse Walker, known among the Indians as Father Walker. She married Mr. Gorin in 1843.

It was at Father Walker's home in Chicago where the rights of the Potawattomie, Ottawa and Chippewa Indians were finally ceded to the United States. That territory included the site of the city of Chicago and northern Illinois.

The appearance of Mr. Gorin's name on the water tower was due to his position as Grand Master of the Illinois Masonic lodge, a position he held in 1867 and 1868. The Masons had charge of the ceremony of laying the cornerstone for the tower, and inscription to that effect, naming Mr. Gorin as grand master, appears on the stone, commemorating that occasion.

Jerome R. Gorin, born in Hopkinsville, Ky., Oct. 12, 1817, and later a resident of Vandalia, came to Decatur in 1833 and lived here for a period of sixty-three years. He was admitted to the bar in 1842, but his career was not confined to the law. He served the city in various capacities, city clerk, city attorney and justice of the peace, in 1856 was elected to the legislature, serving one term, and was well known as banker and church worker. When practicing law, Mr. Gorin was for a time a partner of Charles Emerson, later was with Kirby Benedict, and still later with Arthur Gallagher.

In 1861 Mr. Gorin was invited to join in the banking business of James Millikin. He became the cashier of the bank and later became a partner in the business. He was connected with this bank until 1881, when he started a new bank, known as Gorin and Bills. This firm was succeeded by Gorin and Dawson. The business was sold to L. B. Casner, and merged with the new Citizens National bank, of which Mr. Gorin was an incorporator and first president.

While Mr. Gorin was Grand Master of the Masons, the commandery organized at Olney, Ill., was named Gorin Commandery in his honor. Mr. Gorin, at the time of his death in 1897, had the distinction of being the oldest member of Macon lodge No. 8. His portrait hangs in the new Masonic temple.

For many years Mr. Gorin was active in the First Methodist church. He was particularly interested in Sunday school work, and also was one of the leaders in the Y. M. C. A.

Mr. and Mrs. Gorin were the parents of six children. Mrs. Gorin passed away in 1894 and Mr. Gorin in 1897. Two of their sons are in business in Decatur today. They are O. B. Gorin and J. P. Gorin, president and vice president respectively, of the Millikin National Bank.

ISAAC C. PUGH

"Always where duty called him" is the tribute paid to Isaac C. Pugh, veteran of three wars, who came to Decatur in 1829 and lived here until his death in 1874.

Colonel Pugh had a genius for war, and as long as there was fighting to be done, he fought. When war was over, he was one of the most peaceful of citizens.

In the service of his country he was patriotic, brave, keen, and a natural leader of men. As a private citizen he was honest and upright. He was successful in many lines of activity. As a politician, a merchant, a farmer, an office holder, he stood in the front rank. A man of forceful character, he was recognized as a man capable of filling high positions.

He went into the Black Hawk war as a second lieutenant of the Macon county company and came home as its captain.

In the war with Mexico he served as captain of Company C of the Fourth Regiment, which was in the thick of the battle of Cerro Gordo pass.

In the Civil war he served first as captain of Company A of the 8th Illinois Infantry, then as colonel of the 41st Illinois infantry, which he organized. He participated in many of the hardest fought battles of the rebellion, and well deserved the rank of brigadier-general which was bestowed upon him.

In the early days of Macon county he was county commissioner, serving from 1830 to 1834. During his life in Decatur he held at different times the offices of master-in-chancery, county treasurer, county clerk, county assessor, collector, mayor, postmaster, and member of the state legislature. Probably no other Decatur man was elected so often to public office as was Isaac C. Pugh, and he always served faithfully and well.

In honor of this distinguished man, Pugh school was given his name. The street now known as Grand avenue also had been named for him and was so called for many years, though later the name was changed. The street was the southern boundary of a tract of land owned by General Pugh in the northwest part of the city.

Isaac C. Pugh married Elvira E. Gorin. They had eleven children. One son, John Pugh, who spent his early life in Decatur, afterwards moved to Seattle, Wash. When he was eighty-six years old, John Pugh came back on a visit, in the year 1924, and found the old Pugh farm built up with homes and a part of the city.

HENRY PRATHER

Henry Prather, who had been born in Montgomery county, Md., Nov. 26, 1802, came to Macon county in 1837 in the capacity of surveyor and was engaged for some time in selecting and surveying lands for Philo Hale.

During the early days of Decatur he was interested in various business enterprises. He was one of the company that built the Macon house in 1839. He was one of the men who went with Richard J. Oglesby to California for gold in 1849. He was in the meat packing business with J. J. Peddecord, and later with B. H. Cassell in the hardware line.

He served a number of years as president of the Greenwood cemetery association and due him is the credit for the beautiful arrangement of the grounds, on which he spent much time and work.

Mr. Prather married Amanda Oglesby, sister of R. J. Oglesby. Their home on North Franklin street was for years a center of social life.

Mr. Prather came to his death through an accident in the fall of 1869, when the buggy in which he was seated was upset, he was thrown out, and his skull fractured. The buggy had been struck by a runaway team on East Cerro Gordo street. The team was taking

Billy Barnwell, Dan Brenneman and Captain A. Toland to a fire at the agricultural works, and it became frightened when a wheel came off the rig. In the buggy which Mr. Prather occupied were also John Imboden and Richard Newell, Jr.

His funeral was said to have been the largest that had ever been held in Decatur up to that time.

J. J. PEDDECORD

Meat and lard were just as good as cold cash in the days when J. J. Peddecord was running a business in Decatur. In fact, they were of more value as a circulating medium than much of the bank script of the time. With them offered in payment, one could buy anything.

For about twenty years Mr. Peddecord had a store on the present site of the Morehouse and Wells company building, and most of that time he was paid in meat. For dressed hogs, he gave credit of 2 to 2½ cents a pound. He kept this meat at the Roundtop, his meathouse on South Water street, about where the Brunswick hotel now stands.

Customers paid their bills in meat in the winter, and Mr. Peddecord shipped the meat out in the spring, when the ice was out of the river. It was hauled by wagon to Beardstown or Naples, then shipped by water to New Orleans, much of it going on to New York. Sometimes the supply of meat in the Roundtop was of sufficient quantity to be worth $20,000 to $25,000. The meat was cut up and cured, and made into mess pork and lard. In its best days Mr. Peddecord's store did a business of as much as $32,000 a year.

Most of the business was done on credit, and people made their payments only once a year. They could always be depended upon to pay, and extending credit for a year did not worry the merchant.

Mr. Peddecord, who was born in Rockville, Md., Nov. 8, 1815, came to Decatur in 1838, and from that time until his death was a resident of the city and a factor in its upbuilding. When he came here he entered 160 acres of prairie land northwest of Decatur. He and Henry Prather first started a store in a log cabin on the northwest corner of Lincoln square, moving later to the site further east, on East Main street. In 1849 Mr. Peddecord bought Mr. Prather's interest and ran the business alone for a time, then he took in Hosea Armstrong as a partner. Armstrong left, however, to go to California in the gold rush. In 1852 Lowber L. Burrows came to Decatur to take a position in Mr. Peddecord's store, and it was not long until he became a member of the firm.

Mr. Peddecord had other interests in Decatur outside of his store. He served as mayor, was banker and manufacturer. He was one of the founders of the Decatur Furniture company. His home was one of the social centers of the city.

Mr. Peddecord and Mrs. Ophelia Adamson, sister of Governor Richard J. Oglesby, were married July 30, 1842. Five children were born to them. Mr. Peddecord built a substantial and handsome brick home at 226 North Franklin street. In this hospitable home Governor Oglesby and other noted men often were entertained. Mrs. Peddecord passed away in 1897, and her husband on July 27, 1899.

CHAPTER XXVIII

CITY AND COUNTY GOVERNMENT

FROM the time Decatur was laid out in 1829 until the year 1836 it had no municipal government, the county commissioners' court being the only governing body. By 1836, however, Decatur had become a real village, its population being estimated at about 300, and that year the town municipality was effected with the election of a town board of trustees.

The first officers named were:

President—Richard Oglesby (uncle of R. J. Oglesby who became governor).

Trustees—William T. Crissey, G. R. White, William Webb, Thomas Cowan, H. M. Gorin, Henry Butler, Landy Harrell.

Clerk—Andrew Love.

Constables—James Carter, William Webb.

The first meeting of the board was held Nov. 5, 1836. There are some breaks in the records during the early years of the town. Elections were held in 1838, 1839, 1840 and 1841, and then there is a gap until 1846. Earlier histories say there was no meeting of the town trustees for five years.

In 1839 two elections were held, the second being under a special act incorporating the town of Decatur. There were also two elections in the year 1854.

CITY CHARTER

By 1855 Decatur was taking on the proportions of a city, the coming of the railroads having added new life. Accordingly in the winter of that year a special city charter was obtained from the legislature, and on Jan. 7, 1856, election of city officers was held.

The city was divided into four wards. Judges of election were:

First—Jesse H. Elliott, John Humphrey, Isaac Shellabarger.
Second—E. O. Smith, J. Q. A. Odor. John Stickel, Sr.
Third—John Kaufman, P. B. Shepherd, Jonathan Stamper.
Fourth—Michael Elson, John Rea, John Cassell.

The polling places were: First, James Simpson's carpenter shop; second, Wood and McNabb's carpenter shop; third, Cassell house; fourth, court house.

The first city officers elected were:

Mayor—John P. Post.

Aldermen—Frank Priest, first ward; E. O. Smith, second ward; J. R. Gorin, S. P. Ohr, third ward; J. J. Ballentine, H. Taylor, fourth ward.

Clerk and Attorney—C. C. Post.

Treasurer and Assessor—Samuel C. Allen.

The first meeting of the new council was held in the office of Post and Post Jan. 25, 1856. Business must have been heavy, for the council members met again the next evening. Then they decided to meet the second Monday of each month.

JOHN P. POST

Decatur's first city marshal was Captain John W. Hartley, who served in 1856 and 1857. He also was constable two terms later on, and was on the police force under Mayor W. B. Chambers. Mr. Hartley was a veteran of the Mexican and Civil wars.

In 1867 the city obtained a new charter, with enlarged powers.

After the city grew, the number of wards was increased to seven; with two aldermen being elected from each ward, it made a membership of fourteen on the council.

The aldermanic form of government prevailed until Jan. 18, 1911, when Decatur adopted the commission form of government.

The first city officers under commission form, as elected in April, 1911, were Daniel F. Dinneen, mayor; Charles Becker, W. P. Shade, Harry Ruthrauff, H. F. Robbins, commissioners.

City council members of 1929 did not need to bother with some of the problems that took the attention of the first city council elected in 1856. The city dads in that year were busy looking after watering troughs, hitching racks, street crossings, drains, a public well, and so on. However, they were just as busy men as the council seventy years later with its improvements on larger scales to be projected. The years have brought much to do in changing Decatur from a muddy little hamlet to a city of paved streets and modern conveniences.

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

The board of trustees for the town of Decatur from 1836 until it secured a city charter in 1856 was composed of the following:

1836—Richard Oglesby, president; trustees, William T. Crissey, G. R. White, William Webb, Thomas Cowan, H. M. Gorin (resigned), Henry Butler, Landy Harrell. Andrew Love was clerk but resigned; James Carter and William Webb were constables.

1838—Joseph Williams (resigned), Henry Snyder, presidents. Trustees, James Renshaw, James F. Montgomery, George R. White, Henry Prather. E. McClellan was clerk; Richard Oglesby and J. P. Hickcok, treasurer; John S. Adamson, assessor; William Radcliff and Thomas Cowan, supervisors; J. H. Elliott, constable.

1839—Trustees, William T. Crissey, S. B. Dewees, J. M. Fordice, James F. Montgomery.[2]

1839—Kirby Benedict, president. Trustees, John S. Adamson, Thomas Cowan, Samuel B. Dewees, Jesse H. Elliott, William T. Crissey, Thomas H. Read. H. M. Gorin was clerk;

George R. White, treasurer; H. Prather, assessor and collector; G. W. Gilbrath, Zebulon Cantrall and William Webb, constables.

1840—Joseph King, president. Trustees, Henry Goodman, William Cantrill, B. F. Oglesby, David Wright, John G. Speer, David E. Ralls. H. M. Gorin was clerk; G. R. White, treasurer; I. C. Pugh, collector; William Webb, constable.

1841—Thomas P. Rodgers, president. Trustees, J. H. Elliott, D. E. Ralls, G. R. White, Henry Goodman, Benjamin R. Austin, J. D. Tait. J. S. Post was clerk; J. H. Read, treasurer; Joseph Stevens, assessor and collector; Wiliam Webb, constable.

(The 1841 meeting was the last held for five years.)

1846—David Krone, president. Trustees, Elijah Krone, Joseph Kauffman, Michael Elson, Thomas H. Read. E. B. Hale was clerk; G. A. Smith, constable.

1847—D. Krone, president. Trustees, T. H. Read, M. Elson, Joseph Kauffman. Nathan P. West was clerk; E. McClellan, constable; B. H. Cassell, assessor.

1848—J. H. Elliott, president. Trustees, H. Prather, H. Armstrong, E. O. Smith, Joseph King. N. P. West was clerk; E. McClellan, constable; B. H. Cassell, assessor and treasurer.

1849—Joseph Kauffman, president. Trustees, H. J. Armstrong, J. H. Ellott, Joseph King, W. S. Crissey. N. P. West was clerk; B. H. Cassell, assessor and treasurer; H. Goodman, constable.

1850—Joseph King, president. Trustees, W. J. Stamper, William Prather, C. H. Pringle, William Wheeler. B. H. Cassell was clerk; William Wheeler, constable; B. H. Cassell, assessor and treasurer.

1851—William S. Crissey, president. Trustees, William Prather, C. H. Pringle, Joseph King, W. J. Stamper. B. H. Cassell was clerk, treasurer and assessor.

1852—W. J. Stamper, president. Trustees, W. S. Crissey, William Prather, C. H. Pringle, Joseph King. B. H. Cassell was clerk, treasurer and assessor.

1853—William Prather, president. Trustees, W. S. Crissey, W. J. Stamper, Joseph King, John Ricketts. B. H. Cassell was clerk, treasurer and assessor.

1854—William Prather, president. Trustees, William J. Stamper, William S. Crissey, Joseph King, Thomas H. Wingate. B. H. Cassell was clerk.

1854—Thomas H. Wingate, president. Trustees, William S. Crissey, William Martin, Elias Tanner, John Ricketts. B. H. Cassell was clerk; H. Churchman,. constable.

1855—Thomas H. Wingate, president. Trustees, A. L. Kellar, J. R. Gorin, William S. Crissey, William Martin. B. H. Cassell was clerk.

MAYORS

Following is the list of mayors of Decatur since 1856:

1856—John P. Post.
1857—William A. Barnes.
1858—James B. Shoaff.
1859—A. T. Hill.
1860—Sheridan Wait.
1861—E. O. Smith.
1862—Thomas O. Smith.
1863-1864—J. J. Peddecord.
1865-1866—Franklin Priest.
1867—John K. Warren.
1868—Isaac C. Pugh.
1869—William L. Hammer.
1870—Franklin Priest.
1871—E. M. Misner.
1872—D. S. Shellabarger.
1873—Martin Forstmeyer.
1874—Franklin Priest.
1875—R. H. Meriweather.
1876-1877—W. B. Chambers.
1878—Franklin Priest.
1879—L. L. Haworth.
1880-1881-1882—H. W. Waggoner.
1883-1884—W. B. Chambers.
1885-1890—M. F. Kanan.
1891-1892—W. B. Chambers.
1893-1894—David C. Moffitt.
1895-1896—D. H. Conklin.
1897-1898—B. Z. Taylor.
1899-1900—George A. Stadler.
1901-1904—C. F. Shilling.
1905-1906—G. W. Lehman.
1907-1908—E. S. McDonald.
1909-1910—C. M. Borchers.

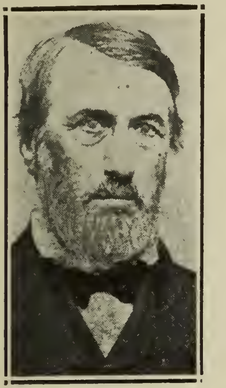
COMMISSION FORM

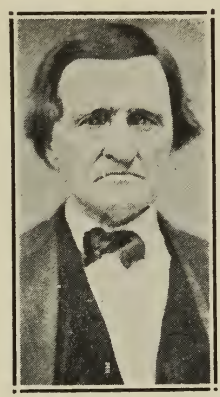
1911-1919—Dan Dinneen.
1919-1923—C. M. Borchers.
1923-1927—Elmer R. Elder.
1927- —O. W. Smith.

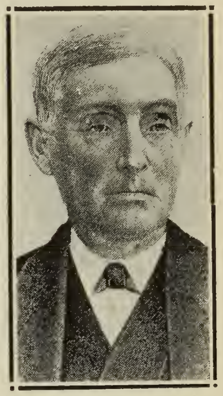
COUNTY GOVERNMENT

County governing boards, at the time Macon county was laid out, consisted of three members. Such boards were abolished, however, by act of the legislature approved Feb. 12, 1849, and the county court was established. This provided for the election of a county judge, and two additional justices of the peace. The county court plan lasted in Macon county from 1850 to 1860. On Feb. 17, 1851, the present system of township organization was established by law, in this state, but Macon county did not put it into effect until in 1859.

Solomon Garver, representing citizens of the county, presented a petition to the county court Sept. 8, 1859, asking for an election to decide on township organization. Vote was ordered for the November election. In November the proposition carried. At the December term of the county court three commissioners, William Cantrill, David Garver, and James Dingman, were named to divide the county into townships. They made their report to the court on Jan. 14, 1860. The report provided for fourteen townships in the county, as follows:


WM. CANTRILL


DAVID GARVER


JAMES DINGMAN

Friend's Creek.
Maroa.
Montgomery (afterwards changed to Austin).
Bull Point (afterward changed to Hickory, and then to Hickory Point).
Decatur.
Long Creek.
Whitmore.
Oakley.
Harris (afterward changed to Harristown).
Wilson (afterward changed to Mt. Zion).
South Wheatland.
South Macon.
Madison (afterward changed to Blue Mound).
Niantic.

The board of supervisors, elected from these townships, met and organized on April 30, 1860. Henry B. Durfee of Decatur was selected as chairman.

The first board of supervisors was composed of:

Austin—James S. Parker.
Blue Mound—J. L. Armstrong.
Decatur—Henry B. Durfee; John W. Koehler, assistant.
Friend's Creek—D. K. Wilson.
Harristown—Abraham Eyman.
Hickory Point—J. Y. Braden.
Long Creek—John Rucker.
Maroa—William Crawford.
Mt. Zion—W. C. Mayers.
Niantic—J. H. Hughes.
Oakley—G. W. Forest.
South Macon—W. D. Hamilton.
South Wheatland—I. S. Boardman.
Whitmore—James Lichtenberger.

Three more townships were formed later. Illini was established in April, 1865, Pleasant View in June, 1868, and Milam in September, 1869.

Chairmen of the board of supervisors since its beginning have been as follows:

1860-63, 1866-68—Henry B. Durfee.
1864—J. H. Pickrell, Illini.
1865—John W. Tyler, Long Creek.
1869—W. T. Moffett, Blue Mound.
1870-71-72—A. McBride, Decatur.
1873—Norman Failing, South Macon.
1874-75-76—L. R. Morse, Illini.
1877-78—R. H. Woodcock, South Macon.
1879-80—E. J. Roberts, Illini.
1881-82-84-85—A. T. Hill, Decatur.
1883-86-87—R. H. Woodcock, South Macon.
1888—T. N. Leavitt, Maroa.
1889-90—W. S. Smith, Mt. Zion.
1891—C. H. Garver, Whitmore.
1892-94—H. F. May, Decatur.
1893—O. H. Draper, South Macon.
1895-97—W. H. Bean, Pleasant View.
1896—Ross Hockaday, Whitmore.
1898—J. N. Orr, Friend's Creek.
1899—John Allen, Decatur.
1900-01—H. R. Woodcock, South Macon.
1901—F. R. Querry, Friend's Creek.
1902—J. H. Record, Decatur.
1903—E. R. Hurlburt, Mt. Zion.
1904—W. T. J. Cooper, Friend's Creek.
1905-06—E. G. Allen, Decatur.
1907—D. E. Brett, Hickory Point.
1908—J. I. Lebo, South Macon.
1909-11—W. A. Holman, Decatur.
1910—E. W. Jokisch, Blue Mound.
1912—C. H. Moomey, Pleasant View.
1913—S. M. Bartlett, Decatur.
1914—S. B. Stewart, Whitmore.
1915—O. Schmachtenberger, Decatur.
1916—C. P. Elder, Elwin.
1917-19—J. N. Orr, Friend's Creek.
1918—C. L. Taylor, Blue Mound.
1920—M. C. Stookey, Harristown.
1921—W. R. Hopkins, Decatur.
1922—O. M. Scott, Mt. Zion.
1923—W. L. Kline, Decatur.
1924—A. C. Ammann, Maroa.
1925—Charles Braden, Decatur.
1926—Robert J. Moore, Niantic.
1927—G. I. Covalt, Decatur.
1928—C. B. Knight, Harristown.
1929—Forrest Pollard, Decatur.

In 1924 the board of supervisors had its first women members. That year Miss Maria Buckingham, Mrs. Flora F. Baldwin and Mrs. Hazel Williford, all of Decatur, were elected as assistant supervisors.

COMMISSIONERS' COURT

The county commissioners court, which handled the affairs of the county from its beginning until 1850, when the county commissioners' court was abolished and the county court established, was composed of the following members:

1829-1830—Benjamin Wilson, Elisha Freeman, James G. Miller.
1830-1831—Elisha Freeman, James G. Miller, I. C. Pugh.
1831-1832—James G. Miller, I. C. Pugh, David Davis.
1832-1833—James G. Miller, I. C. Pugh, David Davis.
1833-1834—Elisha Freeman, Hugh Bolls, Philip D. Williams.
1834-1835—James A. Piatt, William Muirhead, Benjamin Wilson.
1835-1836—James A. Piatt, William Muirhead, Benjamin Wilson.
1836-1837—James A. Piatt, William Muirhead, Benjamin Wilson.
1837-1838—James A. Piatt, William Muirhead, Josiah Clifton.
1838-1839—William Muirhead, James A. Piatt, Abram Chapin.
1839-1840—Elisha Freeman, 3 years; Benjamin Wilson, 2 years; Hiram Chapin, 1 year. (Under act of March 1, 1837, terms of service were fixed at three years, one to be elected each year.)
1840-1841—Elisha Freeman, Benjamin Wilson, John Rucker.
1841-1842—Elisha Freeman, John Rucker, Abraham H. Keller.
1842-1843—John Rucker, Abraham H. Keller, Leonard Ashton.
1843-1844—John Rucker, Leonard Ashton, Andrew W. Smith.
1844-1845—John Rucker, Andrew W. Smith, James D. Tait.
1845-1846—Andrew W. Smith, James D. Tait, Elisha Freeman.
1846-1847—Elisha Freeman, Samuel Rea, James D. Campbell.
1847-1848—Elisha Freeman, Samuel Rea, James D. Campbell.
1848-1849—Elisha Freeman, Samuel Rea, James D. Campbell.

COUNTY COURT

The county court, which was in existence from 1850 to 1860, was as follows:

1850-1856—William Prather, county judge; Jacob Hostetler, associate justice; John Rucker, associate justice.

1856-1857—John Rickets, county judge; Jacob Hostetler, associate justice; John Rucker, associate justice.

1857-1860—John Rickets, county judge; Jacob Spangler, associate justice; M. G. Camron, associate justice.

COUNTY OFFICERS

Probate judges from 1830 to 1849 were:

1830-1835—Daniel McCall.
1835-1837—Charles Emerson.
1837-1843—Kirby Benedict.
1843-1846—John G Speer.
1846-1849—Thomas H. Read.

County judges since 1860:

1861-1866—Samuel F. Greer.
1886-1894—William E. Nelson.
1894-1902—William L. Hammer.
1902-1914—O. W. Smith.
1914- —John H. McCoy.

County clerks since 1829:

1832-1837—Daniel McCall.
1837-1841—H. M. Gorin.
1841-1847—N. W. Peddecord.
1847-1851—E. B. Hale.
1851-1857—W. W. Oglesby.
1857-1865—Samuel Rea.
1865-1869—I. C. Pugh.
1869-1882—H. W. Waggoner.
1882-1894—George P. Hardy.
1894-1906—J. M. Dodd.
1906-1914—M. E. Peniwell.
1914-1928—C. H. Patterson.
1928- —E. A. Patterson.

Masters in chancery since 1830:

1830-1860—I. C. Pugh.
1860-1864—William A. Barnes.
1864-1873—R. H. Meriweather.
1873-1888—John A. Brown.
1888-1903—J. J. Finn.
1903-1916—W. H. Black.
1916-1921—Carl N. Weilepp.
1921-1928—John W. Evans.
1928- —L. C. Wheat.

Sheriffs since 1829 have been:

1829-1835—William Warnick.
1835-1838—John McMennamy.
1838-1840—James Stevens.
1840-1842—William Warnick.
1842-1850—William Wheeler.
1850-1852—Samuel Rea.
1852-1854—William Wheeler.
1854-1856—S. M. Whitehouse.
1856-1858—E. McClellan.
1858-1860—William Wheeler.
1860-1862—George Goodman.
1862-1864—John W. Bear.
1864-1866—A. A. Murray.
1866-1868—John E. Jones.
1868-1870—James Travis.
1870-1872—George M. Wood.
1872-1876—I. D. Jennings.
1876-1880—Martin Forstmeyer.
1880-1886—William W. Foster.
1886-1890—John H. Mauzy.
1890-1894—Peter Perl.
1894-1898—Jerry Nicholson.
1898-1902—G. W. Lehman.
1902-1906—C. A. Thrift.
1906-1910—B. A. McGorray.
1910-1914—J. P. Nicholson.
1914-1918—C. E. Tandy.
1918-1922—M. E. Peniwell.
1922-1926—W. A. Underwood.
1926- —C. A. Thrift.

Coroners since 1830 and the year of their election:

1830—David Manley.
1831—Samuel B. Dewees.
1834—Jacob Hornback.
1836—John Miller.
1840—Parmenius Smallwood.
1862—M. Y. Givler.
1866—Isaac D. Jennings.
1870—M. Y. Givler.
1874—Daniel Aungst.
1876—Cassidy Chenoweth.
1878—John Dinneen.
1882—Jesse E. Bendure.
1884—Peter Perl.
1888—Jesse E. Bendure.
1900—Charles E. Dawson.
1904—T. C. Buxton.
1912—Elmer Brintlinger.
1916—L. A. Monson.
1920—Roy M. Dawson.

State's Attorneys since 1830:

1830-1836—John H. Pugh.
1836-1840—D. H. Campbell.
1840-1844—Josiah Lamborn.
1844-1848—John A. McDougal.
1848-1851—David Campbell.
1851-1855—Elam Rust.
1855-1860—J. R. Eden.
1860-1864—James P. Boyd.
1864-1868—D. L. Bunn
1868-1872—M. B. Thompson.
1872-1876—C. C. McComas.
1876-1880—I. A. Buckingham.
1880-1884—W. C. Johns.
1884-1888—E. P. Vail.
1888-1900—I. R. Mills.
1900-1912—W. E. Redmon.
1912-1920—J. L. Deck.
1920-1928—Charles F. Evans.
1928- —John W. Evans.

Circuit clerks since 1829:

1829-1834—Daniel McCall.
1834-1841—H. M. Gorin.
1841-1848—N. W. Peddecord.
1848-1856—William Prather.
1856-1860—J. Q. A. Odor.
1860-1869—W. L. Hammer.
1869-1896—E. McClellan.
1896-1900—D. L. Foster.
1900-1920—John Allen.
1920-1922—C. L. Taylor (Died). (C. D. Nowlin appointed; resigned.)
1922- —Harry R. Butt (appointed 1922; elected 1924.)

Recorders:

1920- —Lelah Foster.

Treasurers since 1829:

1829-1830—B. R. Austin.
1830-1831—John Miller.
1831-1832—B. R. Austin.
1832-1834—James Johnson.
1834-1835—Joseph Hostetler.
1835-1837—Joseph Stevens.
1837—J. Renshaw, resigned; G. R. White appointed.
1837-1839—David Davis.
1839-1845—Henry Snyder.
1845-1846—Thomas H. Read, resigned.
1846-1848—George W. Powers.
1848-1853—S. C. Allen.
1853-1858—I. C. Pugh.
1858-1863—William Cantrill.
1863-1869—Ira B. Curtis.
1869-1873—William M. Boyd.
1873-1875—R. H. Park.
1875-1886—George M. Wood.
1886-1890—George R. Steele.
1890-1894—H. Clay Montgomery.
1894-1898—Charles H. Patterson.
1898-1902—Joseph Miller.
1902-1906—Edward R. Moffett.
1906—W. T. J. Cooper (died).
1906-1910—C. E. Tandy.
1910-1914—J. I. Lebo.
1914-1918—John Schroll.
1918-1922—R. Moomey.
1922-1926—B. F. Coffman.
1926—E. C. Coffman.

VOTING PRECINCTS

In its earliest days, the county had two voting precincts. North of the Sangamon was Decatur district, and south of the Sangamon was Ward's district. Soon a third district was established, called Salt Creek district, comprising the north part of the county. Next came Okaw district in the southern part. Then Draper's district in the northeast section was established. It must be remembered that Macon county at that time included much more territory than it does now.

Homes of settlers were used as voting places at first, the precinct often being called after the person whose home was used. After the log court house was built, it became the voting place for Decatur district.

In 1860, the voting precincts were: Ward's, Decatur, Maroa, Miller's, Prairie City, Big Creek, Draper's, Badger, Madison, Macon and Garver's.

In 1929 Macon county had sixty-three voting precincts, forty-six of them being in Decatur township. Maroa is the only township outside of Decatur which has more than one precinct. It has two.

The total number of votes cast in Macon county in the presidential election of 1928 was 35,307.

Some of the important offices which have been filled by Macon county citizens have been:

Governor of Illinois—Richard J. Oglesby, 1865-1869; 1873 (resigned); 1885-1889.
United States Senator—Richard J. Oglesby, 1873-1879.
Congressmen—Jesse H. Moore, 1869-1871, 1871-1873; C. M. Borchers, 1913-1915; Charles Adkins, 1925-1927, 1927-1929, 1929-.

STATE SENATORS

1832-1836—William Williamson.
1836-1838—James Allen.
1848-1850—Edward O. Smith.
1856-1860—Joel S. Post.
1860-1862—Richard J. Oglesby.
1878--1882—William T. Moffett.
1882-1886—Jason Rogers.
1886-1890—William C. Johns.
1890-1894—Harmon Manecke.
1894-1898—M. F. Kanan.
1904-1912—James A. Henson.
1912-1916—Willis R. Shaw.
1916-1920—W. G. McCullough.
1920-1924—Orpheus W. Smith.
1925-1928—Jesse L. Deck.
1929—Charles E. Lee.

REPRESENTATIVES

1834-1836—Thomas B. Trower.
1836-1838—William G. Reddick (died).
1838-1840—Jesse W. Gouge.

1840-1842—Robert F. Barnett.
1842-1844—Samuel G. Nesbitt.
1844-1846—Kirby Benedict.
1846-1848—William Cantrill.
1850-1852—Charles Emerson.
1852-1854—Henry Prather.
1854-1856—Henry C. Johns.
1856-1858—Jerome R. Gorin.
1862-1864—James Elder.
1864-1866—Isaac C. Pugh.
1866-1868—Abraham B. Bunn.
1870-1872—William E. Nelson, William T. Moffett.
1872-1874—Joab A. Race, William T. Moffett.
1874-1876—Shaw Pease, Samuel S. Jack.
1876-1878—Samuel S. Jack, Thomas J. Abel.
1878-1880—Bradford K. Durfee.
1880-1882—Jason Rogers, Bradford K. Durfee.
1882-1884—John H. Crocker.
1884-1886—James M. Graham, Robert A. Gray.
1886-1888—Robert A. Gray.
1888-1890—David P. Keller, Robert H. Hill.
1890-1892—W. S. Smith, David P. Keller.
1892-1894—Thomas N. Leavitt, W. S. Smith.
1898-1902—James M. Gray.
1902-1904—Arthur J. Gallagher, James M. Gray.
1904-1906—James M. Gray.
1910-1912—Thomas N. Leavitt, Cyrus J. Tucker.
1912-1914—William McGinley, Cyrus J. Tucker.
1914-1916—T. C. Buxton.
1916-1918—Horace W. McDavid.
1918-1920—Orpheus W. Smith, Horace W. McDavid.
1920-1924—John Clark, Albert A. Hill.
1925- —W. C. Chynoweth, Grover C. Hoff, John Clark.

Macon county is in

Congressional district No. 19 (Champaign, Coles, Dewitt, Douglas, Macon, Moultrie, Shelby, Piatt counties)

Senatorial district No. 28 (Macon, Logan, Dewitt counties)

Supreme court district No. 3

Appellate district No. 3

Circuit court district No. 6

Circuit court judges of the district at this writing are James S. Baldwin, Decatur; D. H. Wamsley, Tuscola; Franklyn H. Boggs, Champaign.

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[1] John P. Post was serving as postmaster at the time of his election as mayor. When he took the oath of office, the man who administered the oath was County Judge William Prather, who had been Post's opponent in the race for mayor. After serving a year as mayor, Post was elected alderman from the third ward and served two years. During the Civil War he became colonel. In 1871 he moved to Colorado where he held public offices.

[2] So far as can be told from the records, this board of trustees never met, but an election was held May 6, 1839, under the special act incorporating the town of Decatur, and a new board was chosen at that time.

CHAPTER XXIX

POSTAL DEPARTMENT

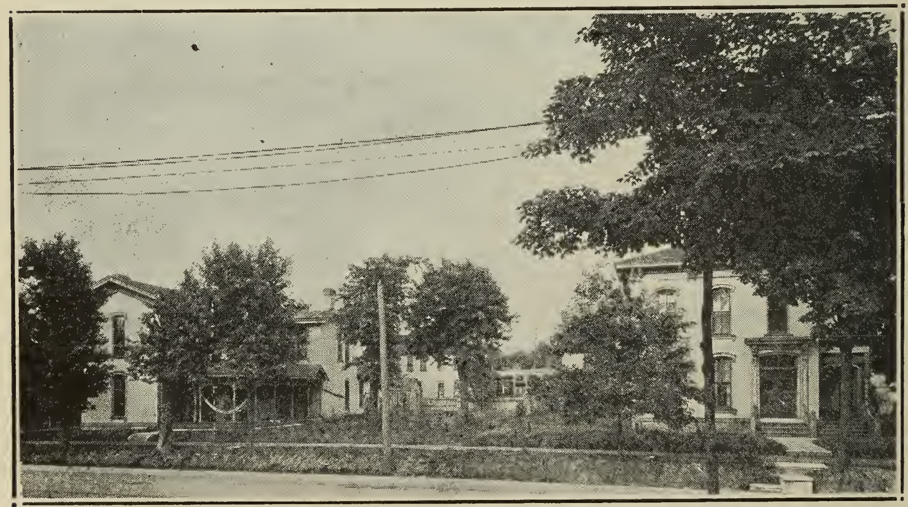
A hundred years of history of the Decatur postoffice is another story of a century of progress of the city.

If Daniel McCall, Decatur's first postmaster, in 1830, and J. H. Hill, Decatur's postmaster in 1930, could get together and compare notes, it no doubt would be an interesting session. Suffice to say, that the job of postmaster in the year 1930 is a far cry from the same job in 1830. If the first postmaster could take a peek into the Decatur postoffice some time just before Christmas now, and could see the stacks of mail piled high, he would probably suffer a collapse.

From the occasional letter which came a hundred years ago, the postal business in Decatur has grown to an enormous figure. Postoffice receipts for the year 1929 were $409,874.25.

A hundred years ago one man could handle the postmaster's work and four or five other official positions, and still not be a busy man. Today it takes the full time of scores of government employes to do the work.

Decatur's first postmaster received his appointment March 6, 1830. The postal business was not heavy enough then to require a



POSTOFFICE SITE AS IT APPEARED BEFORE PRESENT BUILDING WAS STARTED special office, and the postoffice was wherever the postmaster happened to be in business.

Several of the early day postmasters were storekeepers and naturally took care of the mail in their stores, usually having a small box somewhere in which the letters were kept.

Mention has often been made in stories of the old days to the effect that the postmasters carried the mail in their hats. It was true. Often the amount of mail was so small that a postmaster had no trouble in finding room in his hat for it, and would use that method of carrying it, in case he went to deliver a letter.

One didn't have to "lick the stamp" then when a letter was sent, for there were no postage stamps. Goose quills provided the pens. Ink was home made. People who felt the need of having blotters used a sand blotter. It was a metal or tin container, filled with sand, and the sand was sprinkled over the written sheet, as one uses a salt or pepper shaker. The last page of the letter always was blank, as that formed the page for the address when the letter was folded and sealed with sealing wax. Envelopes such as are used today were then unknown. Ye correspondent in those days wrote his letter, folded it with the blank side out, sealed it, addressed it, and it was ready to go.

All the town turned out when it was time for the mail to arrive. Not that every one was expecting a letter—ah, no—but yet one never knew what might happen. It wasn't a bad idea to be around when the mail was distributed, in case—!

Anyway, the postoffice was a favorite meeting place for the people. There they would see their friends. Even if Mrs. Blank didn't get a letter herself she was interested in knowing who was fortunate enough to receive one. One by one the postmaster read the names of the persons to whom his painfully few letters were addressed. Then the persons so honored stepped up and claimed their mail. That is, they did if they happened to have 25 cents in their pockets to pay the postage. If they didn't the letter had to wait.

After postal business grew to the extent that an office was needed, a room for that purpose was secured. Since then it has been moved from pillar to post, occupying various buildings about the city. Not until the year 1909 when the government building in use today was occupied has the postoffice had a home it could call its own.

At the time of the Civil war the postoffice was located in the room on the site later occupied for years by the B. Stine clothing store, in Central block.

Its next location was at the corner of North Water and East Main street, the drug store corner.

From there it was moved to North Water street, 200 block, just north of the entrance to the Smith Opera house.

Its next move was to South Water street, in the Powers building.

Then the office was moved to the 100 block East Prairie street, northwest corner of the alley, where it remained a number of years.

Next time a change was made in location, the office was moved to the Columbia block on North Main street.

In 1903 the office was changed to the Manitou building in the 300 block on North Water street, where it remained until the new government building was occupied, early in the year 1909.

Carrier service was given the city in 1884 during the administration of Postmaster R. P. Lytle. Since that time Decatur has had free delivery.

In 1902 free rural delivery service was established. W. F. Calhoun was then postmaster.

NEW BUILDING

It was during Mr. Calhoun's service as postmaster that the movement was started to secure a government building for Decatur. After several years of effort on the part of postmaster and citizens, it was announced that Decatur would get such a building. The site at the southeast corner of North Main and Eldorado streets was purchased

POSTOFFICE BUILDING, 1929

in 1904. The corner lot, which was 87 by 152 feet, was bought from C. P. Housum, and 48 feet of the W. T. Wells property adjoining on the south also was purchased. This gave the government a tract 135 by 152 feet for its new building. Cost of the site was $12,000.

Work on the new structure was started in 1907, and the new building was occupied in January, 1909. Congress had first appropriated $80,000 for the building, but later an additional sum of $30,000 was secured, making a total of $110,000.

Business of the postoffice has continued to grow so rapidly that efforts have been made a number of times within recent years to secure an addition to the building. More room soon will be an absolute necessity.

POSTMASTERS SINCE 1830

The list of postmasters in Decatur and the dates of their appointment since the beginning is as follows:

Daniel McCall, March 6, 1830.
Isaac C. Pugh, Oct. 1, 1831.
Daniel McCall, March 15, 1834.
William Cantrill, Feb. 26, 1835.
John G. Speer, May 27, 1837.
Wilson Allen, Feb. 19, 1840.
Thomas P. Rogers, Jan. 20, 1841.
Samuel C. Allen, June 24, 1841.
Alex Mahood, Feb. 25, 1845.
Preston Butler, March 21, 1849.
William J. Usrey, Sept. 5, 1851.
John P. Post, July 7, 1853.
Philip B. Shepherd, Aug. 27, 1858.
John Ryan, Sept. 13, 1859.
Hiram Buck, Sept. 28, 1866.
George B. Peake, March 1, 1867.
William J. Usrey, April 5, 1869.
Isaac C. Pugh, Sept. 5, 1871.
Robert P. Lytle, Dec. 16, 1874.
Samuel S. Jack, Jan. 13, 1887.
John T. Hubbard, Jan. 31, 1891.
Jerry Donahue, June 5, 1894.
William F. Calhoun, Oct. 26, 1897.
Wilson M. Bering, June 27, 1913.
Jacob H. Hill, Jan. 1, 1922 (present incumbent).

CHAPTER XXX

EARLY HOTELS

NO matter how small or how large a town, its citizens and visitors must eat and sleep, and boarding houses and hotels become necessary establishments.

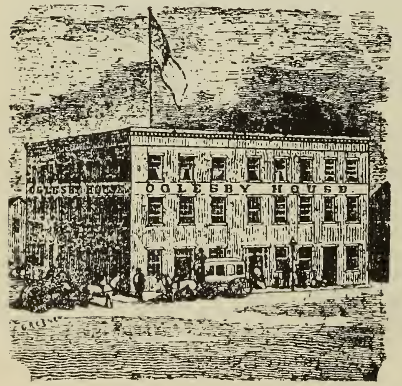
From the days of "Uncle Jimmy" Renshaw's log cabin tavern to the modern hotels of Decatur today, the city has been provided with a good class of hostelries. In the beginning they were crude, just as the town was crude, but they kept pace with the city, and today are on a par with the hotels of the largest cities.

Renshaw's tavern, as stated elsewhere, was Decatur's first place of business, started in 1829. The tavern was a log cabin, standing on the present site of the Lincoln theater entrance. In connection with the tavern was conducted a store. Mr. Renshaw was in business there a number of years and was quite successful.

THE HARRELLS

For many years during the early history of Decatur the name of Harrell was associated with the boarding house and hotel business.

"Landlady" Harrell had a wide reputation and was popular with the traveling public. She had come to Decatur in 1829. For a long time she had a tavern on the north side of the old square. Later she and her sons ran what was known as Social hall south of the square. Her sons, John and Landy Harrell, purchased that hall in 1853 and refurnished it. In 1854 they built the hotel which later was replaced by the St. Nicholas. Mrs. Harrell remained there in charge for some time, and later conducted a boarding house on Wood street, which she continued up until the time of her death in September, 1868.



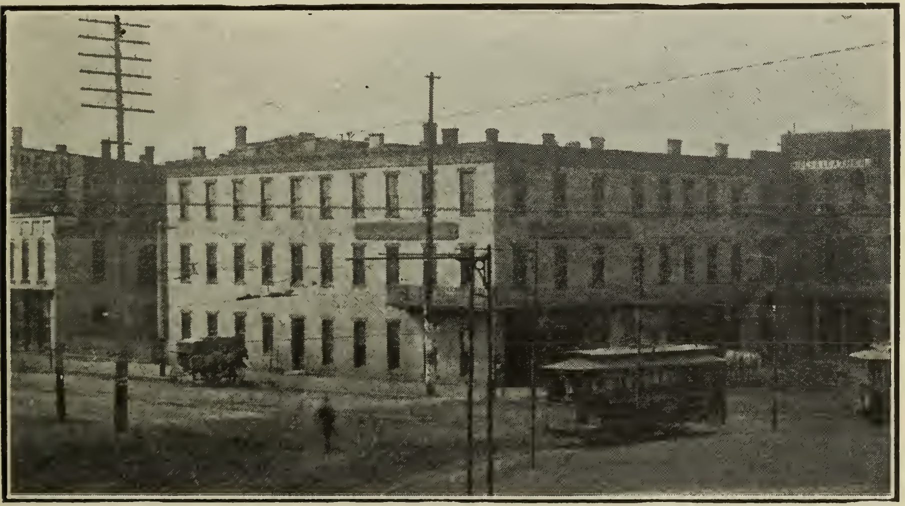
OGLESBY HOUSE, ABOUT 1858

The hotel built by the Harrells was a three story building. That hotel had many different names and different proprietors before it finally came into possession of the Laux Brothers and was named the St. Nicholas, the name it has since kept. It was known as the Harrell House, the Cassell House, the Shoaff house, the Tremont house, the Oglesby house, Varney's hotel, and the Cloudas House.

When it was the Oglesby house it was run by Willis Oglesby, son of the Willis Oglesby who brought the orphan lad, Richard J. Oglesby, to Decatur. This Willis Oglesby came here in 1855. His little daughter was killed by falling through the banisters in the hotel, and the father then gave up the business. Mr. Oglesby was killed later in the battle of Shiloh during the Civil war.

The Laux brothers, Nicholas, Peter and Charles, in 1861 bought the hotel from L. B. Wing of Urbana, who had come into possession of it through having loaned money on it. It had been known then as the Cloudas. The Laux brothers changed the name to the St. Nicholas. The original building was torn down in 1865, and replaced by a three story brick structure. In 1892 that building was demolished to make room for a new five story building, which is a part of the building in use today. The ten story addition to the hotel was erected in 1914.

The Laux brothers introduced some innovations. Three kerosene lamps were bought, the first of the kind in Decatur. One was placed at the head of each stairway. What a wonderful effect! Patrons were delighted. The landlords arranged also for the porter to fill pitchers with hot water, in the mornings, if the guests would leave the pitchers outside their room doors. How up to date this hotel was.



OLD ST. NICHOLAS HOTEL, 1865-1892

To serve as a guide for the bus drivers a lantern was hung in the window of the hotel at night. It could be seen almost all the way to the railroad station. The candles which were used in the rooms were made at the hotel.

Judging from the number of landlords at the hotel before the Laux brothers took charge, one would be likely to think that it was hard sledding for the hotel. This was probably true. After the railroads came, a depot was built which included a hotel, known as Central house.

THE ST. NICHOLAS TODAY

Practically all the transient business went to the Central hotel because of its convenience to the station. It was some years before hotel business in the downtown district became profitable. A hotel on East Eldorado street, known as the Thorpe hotel, was practically put out of business by the opening of the Central hotel. This building was sold, and later became St. Teresa's academy. It had been built by John Humphrey at the time the Great Western railroad had its first station at Broadway street.

THE REVERE

Decatur's first real hotel, and the leading establishment of the sort for many years, was the Macon house, later known as The Revere. From the time of its erection in 1839 until the day it was destroyed by fire in 1871, it was the best known and most important hotel in Decatur. Just how far that importance went was really not realized until after the hotel was burned.

The original building of the Macon house consisted of two stories and basement, containing twelve bedrooms and a large attic. The building had 50 foot frontage on Franklin street and 30 feet on Prairie.

The hotel was erected for Captain David L. Allen and Dr. Thomas H. Read by Edward O. Smith. It was run first by Mrs. Elizabeth Nesbitt and two sons, James and Washington. They had charge of the place until 1841, when it was taken over by John Eckel.

He continued it for about a year. In 1842 David Krone became the proprietor and he conducted the hotel until 1850.[1]

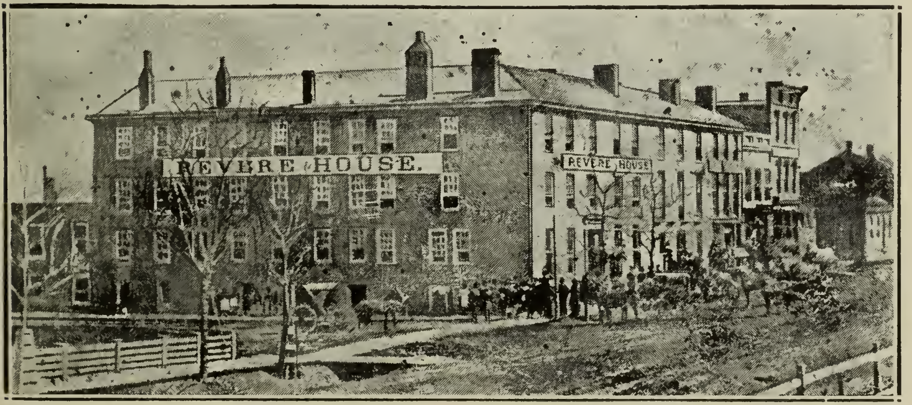
Many stories have been told of the regime of the hotel under the Krone management. Those were the days when it was visited by Abraham Lincoln, Judge David Davis, Leonard Swett and other notable members of the bar. It was said that often the lawyers, who were riding the circuit in those days, prolonged court sessions in Decatur because of the splendid hotel service. It was something they didn't get in many of the cities of that time. Mother Krone's cooking became famous.

The lease which was signed May 3, 1842, between David L. Allen and Thomas H. Read of the first part and David Krone of the second part read partly as follows:

"Have rented the tavern stand together with the stable and appurtenances thereunto belonging, commonly known as the Macon house in Decatur."

The lessors agreed to furnish the necessary bedding, beds and furniture, also all necessary feed for stable, and the said Krone "has the privilege of feeding two cows from the same without charge." They agreed also to furnish Krone with firewood he might need in the tavern. The wood was to come from any timber belonging to Allen and Read, but Krone was to cut and haul the wood at his own expense.

The rent for the hotel was to be half the total receipts. It did not matter whether it was paid in produce, money or trade.



REVERE HOUSE, 1856-1871

The hotel was prosperous during the Krone regime. The next proprietor was Jesse H. Elliott, and he stayed only about a year. George W. Baker was another of the proprietors in the interval of time from the Krones to Hugh Taylor, who bought the hotel in 1856. Mr. Taylor made extensive additions to the hotel. He built both on the east and on the south, and also added another story. These improvements made it a sixty room hotel. It was then called the Taylor house. Taylor sold out in two years to Colonel Samuel Clark of Springfield. Clark's son-in-law, W. L. Barnum, became the proprietor and the hotel then was known as the Barnum house.

Darlington Turnbolt took charge of the place about 1859 and remained until 1865. From 1861 to 1865 L. R. Cain was associated with him, and part of the time they ran the St. Nicholas hotel also. Turnbolt sold out to E. G. Egbert who came from Keokuk in 1865. Egbert died in about a year, but his family continued the hotel for a time.

The next landlord, Dr. Ross, didn't last very long, but while he was at the hotel, it is said, he taught people what real food was. He engaged a chef at a handsome salary, and his meals became famous over the state. A banquet menu in those days puts a modern day one to shame. At one such event for newspaper editors in 1866 more than ninety varieties of food were served. Newspaper editors can eat when they have the chance!

DESTROYED BY FIRE

Other landlords that followed were A. F. Cochran, Willis Brothers and M. C. Hicks. Mr. Hicks bought the property from Colonel Clark in 1871. He had been conducting the hotel only about two months, when fire broke out and laid it in ruins. That fire occurred April 7, 1871. It was thought that a guest left a gas jet burning, and that curtains or wallpaper caught fire from the flame.

Some of the traveling public in those days were not accustomed to gas lights.[2]

If Decatur had had a fire department of the kind it has today, the Revere house would never have burned, but all it had was a volunteer bucket brigade. The fire burned slowly for hours.

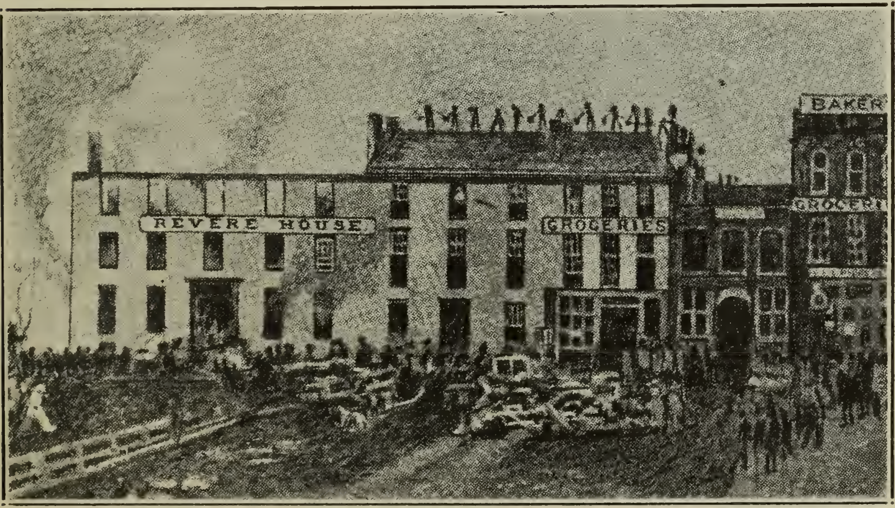
The blaze had started early in the morning, and as fast and as long as possible guests and hotel employes cast out or carried out household effects, personal belongings and anything they could lay hands on. Some of the guests, it was told, had to pick their clothes out from a heap thrown into Central park before they could dress.

B. O. McReynolds nearly lost his life in that fire. He was on the second floor helping to get things out when the floor gave way. He fell in such a way that portions of the fallen floor nearly covered him, and it was with great difficulty that he finally was extricated by George W. Kraft and Mr. Archer. He was in agony before released, being crushed and burned. He carried marks of the injuries until his death. Mr. McReynolds at that time was in the dry goods business with J. F. Roach, their store being on South Park and State streets. He was one of the first at the Revere house after the fire was discovered.

Up to that time, The Revere house had been the hub of the city. All travel from the railroad stations up to the center of the town passed that way. Buses made their stops there, before going farther. The hotel had an excellent reputation and was known all over the state.

CHANGES SITUATION

When the Revere house burned and was not rebuilt, it meant that the section of the business part of the city bordering on the New Square, now Central park, had lost its main attraction. No longer was the new square in the lead in the business rivalry between the old and the new squares. Gradually business fell off in the neighborhood of



THE REVERE HOUSE FIRE, 1871

Franklin and North and South Park streets. Water street became heir to a number of enterprises. Only the most undesirable, mostly saloons and gambling dens, remained on Franklin, and soon that street gained a rather notorious reputation. The old square came into its own and Water and Main streets flourished as the business section.

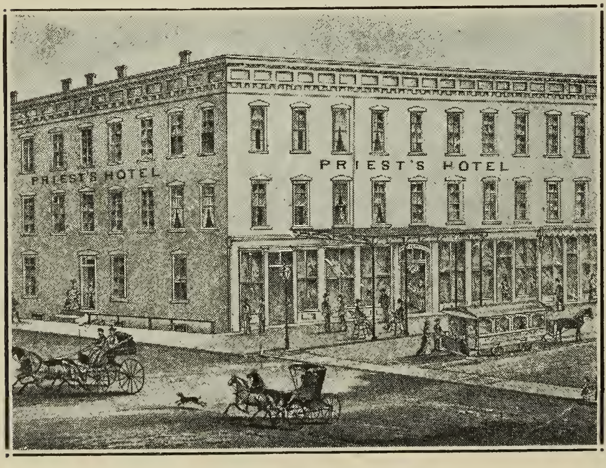
It has been only in comparatively recent years that the streets to the north, south and east of Central park have regained their business standing, due to the necessary expansion of the business district. The automobile trade largely has brought it about. Yet it never has returned and probably never will return to the place it once occupied as Decatur's business center. The burning of the Revere house was the event that brought on the loss of its prestige.

PRIEST HOTEL

Hotels grew in number and in size with the passing of the years. For a long time the Priest hotel on the northwest corner of the Old Square was one of the leading establishments. That building was started by W. S. Crissey about 1860. When the north and south walls were up, work stopped for lack of funds. The property later was bought and the building finished by Franklin Priest, who ran a hotel there for many years.

In 1880 Riley Deming became proprietor and the name was changed to the New Deming. Oscar Spalding followed him as manager.

In 1892 the property came into the hands of A. Wait and it was opened as the Arcade hotel. In 1900, after being rebuilt and enlarged by Mr. Wait, it became the Decatur hotel, with F. B. Stearns as manager. In 1904 the hotel burned, but it was rebuilt. It passed through various changes in manage-



PRIEST HOTEL, 1869

ment until 1915 when the hotel again was destroyed by fire. This time it was not rebuilt as a hotel, though the structure which now stands on the site still houses an eating place, the Lincoln cafe.

BRUNSWICK HOTEL

The Arcade store building adjoining the hotel, a seven story brick structure, also built by Mr. Wait, was destroyed in the fire in 1915.

OLD HOTELS

The Brunswick hotel building is probably the oldest hotel now standing in the city. It was erected about 1860. Its first—or one of the first—proprietor was Thomas B. Albert. Until sometime in the '70s the place was known as the Pennsylvania house, and later it was called the American for a time. Since about 1885 it has been known as the Brunswick. Another old hotel in the downtown district is the St. James, which was built about 1875.

Hotels became rather numerous in the vicinity of the railroad stations. One that stood for many years was the National at Front and Cerro Gordo streets, where the Kraft hotel now stands. It was run by John McEvoy. A picture shows the hotel and the saloon in connection with it, a sight familiar to the old time residents but not to the present day generation. It was replaced by the Kraft hotel in 1907.

NATIONAL HOTEL, 1894

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[1] The proprietor of the Macon house before Landlord Krone had a bar in the basement. Krone did not have one. When people asked him if he had anything to drink he would reply: "Nothing stronger than coffee."

The Daily Republican of Decatur had the following item in its issue Sept. 9, 1869:

"A couple of Springfield youths came to the Revere house Tuesday evening and when they retired for the night, not being accustomed to the luxury of gas in the quiet village where they were born and reared, they treated the jet as they were accustomed to serve the tallow dip, and went to sleep. Their mistake was fortunately discovered by the clerk before any serious effects had resulted and the chaps escaped with nothing more than headache and sick stomachs."

CHAPTER XXXI

RURAL SCHOOLS

MACON county pioneers recognized the importance of having schools. Many of them had come from educational environments, others had not, but all of them wanted advantages for their children. There was then no public school system in Illinois, and they were not going to wait until one was perfected.

As a result there have been schools in the county ever since its beginning, in fact, before the county was laid out. Naturally, the first ones were crude and poor, but so was everything else at the time. Buildings were made of logs. Furniture was cut from the timber. Seats were slabs supported by sticks. Desks were puncheon shelves, fastened on wooden pins driven into the walls. Sections of logs at the sides of the building were cut out to make windows, and the holes covered with greased paper.

Some of the earliest teachers were as poor in proportion as their surroundings. A teacher had to be picked up anywhere he could be found, and often he knew little more than the pupils. One did not have to know much. The instructor of that day did not worry about a teacher's certificate. Yet there were some good teachers, too.[1] Most of the early teachers were men. It required brawn as well as brain then, and handling a school was considered too hard for a woman.

After 1872, when the law was amended to require teachers to pass an examination, the standard of the teaching profession was raised.

The earliest schools were all of the subscription type. A subscription paper was passed, and patrons subscribed what they could give to the support of a school. When enough money was in sight, a teacher was employed. Patrons were expected to subscribe according to the number of children they had in school, though that wasn't always possible.

FIRST SCHOOLS

Records available today on the early schools of the county do not agree as to the date of erection of the first school building. Lewis B. Ward, one of the pioneers, said that the first school building was erected in 1825 on the old Widick place, later known as the

P. M. Wikoff land, three and one-half miles southwest of Decatur, and that the first teacher was named Taylor, generally called "Frozen" Taylor. The land was first known as the Lewis B. Ward land, and the school was called the Ward school. According to old residents, this was the school afterwards known as the Cross Roads school, so it has had continuous existence since 1825. The first building was abandoned in 1845. Since then the school has had four different buildings.

The second school building in Macon county, according to Lewis B. Ward, was built in 1828 on land southwest of Decatur owned later by W. C. Smith. In this building Abraham Lincoln attended "spellings" and other gatherings. A man named Nelson, called "A Little Yankee," taught there.

Other records say that the first house erected for school purposes was put up in 1826 on Stevens creek, in the neighborhood of the Stevens settlement.

In Blue Mound township, according to report, there was a school as early as 1828, with Daniel McCall as teacher.

In the year 1829 or 1830 a school was erected in Harristown township on James Miller's land.

Friend's Creek township had a school as early as 1835 and 1836, the first building for the purpose being erected in 1838.

In Mt. Zion township a schoolhouse was erected about 1840 about three-quarters of a mile west of the present village of Mt. Zion.

Long Creek township had a school building as early as 1834, located in Section 16. Daniel Stickel was the first teacher.

What was known as the Orthodox school house was built in Whitmore township in 1841 by free contributions of such materials as the settlers could provide. This building was designed for common school, singing school, spelling school, debating societies, lecture room, political meetings, and other public uses. It was constructed entirely of oak. It occupied the site of what became the Union cemetery.

Oakley township had a school as early as 1830, with Alexander Patton as the first teacher.

Mt. Gilead was one of the earliest of the country schools. At first its area covered about all of what is now South Wheatland township. This school is now known as Elm Grove, and the present building is a short distance north of the site of the first school house.

One of the well known early schools was the Bagdad school. The building was erected for both church and school purposes. It was on a lot donated by Samuel Cox, and stood on the present site of the Sharon Methodist church. Previous to the erection of this building church services had been held in the homes of Glenn Church, John Gulick and others. After this building was outgrown, separate buildings were erected. The church remained on the same site, but the school was located at a different point, a mile east and south, and it became known as the Sunnyside school.

Another early school was the Bull Point school north of Decatur on the Bloomington road, in Hickory Point township. It was erected on land belonging to William F. Montgomery.

County school commissioner was the title given to the director of schools in the county in the beginning. In 1865 the title was changed to county superintendent of schools. So far as records show, James Johnson was the first school commissioner of Macon county, serving from 1832 to 1834. After him came the following:

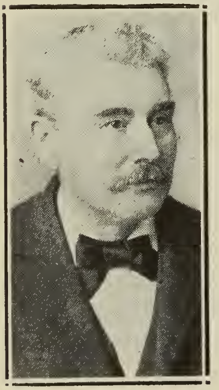
SUPERINTENDENTS

1834-1835—James Bradshaw.
1835-1838—Charles Emerson.
1838-1840—H. M. Gorin.
1840-1847—P. D. Williams.
1847-1860—W. S. Crissey.
1860-1864—C. C. Burroughs.
1864-1869—Edwin Parks.
1869-1873—O. F. McKim.
1873-1877—S. P. Nickey.

JOHN TRAINER

By this time schools had made great advance in Illinois and were on higher levels, but the year 1877 saw the beginning of the regime of a county superintendent, who not only put Macon county "on the map," so far as rural school work was concerned, but who started a system that was adopted by the state of Illinois and many other states as well.

The man who made Macon county famous in school circles was John Trainer, who served as the county superintendent from 1877 to 1885.



JOHN TRAINER

He is called the father of the system of grading in country schools, the course of study and the standardizing of rural schools. He is credited with having done more for the rural schools than any other educator in Illinois.

"Trainer's Manual and Guide" developed into a booklet known as the "Macon County Guide" and was used as a basis for manuals printed by other county superintendents, and finally grew into a state course of study for country schools. It has been adopted by a number of states. Trainer published various books and helps. One of his books was "How to Study United States History." Mr. Trainer had marked ability as a teacher and was a man who inspired pupils, as well as teachers and parents.

OLD FORSYTH SCHOOL BUILDING

Since Mr. Trainer the position of county superintendent of schools has been filled by the following:

1886-90—Thomas L. Evans.
1890-94—John N. Donahey.
1894-1902—John G. Keller.
1902-06—A. A. Jones.
1906-10—Leona F. Bowman.
1910-18—Mary Moore Eyman.
1918-22—Everett L. Dickey.
1922 to date—Cora B. Ryman.

In 1877 the plan to hold annual teachers' institutes was inaugurated. Before that, such institutes had been held occasionally.

What is believed to be the oldest rural school building now standing in the county is the old building at Forsyth now used as a machine shop. It was erected in 1864 and was used as a school until 1927 when the present day building was constructed.

One of the best of the modern day rural school buildings is the Brick school west of Warrensburg. There are many other splendid structures, with modern equipment.

Today Macon county has 5,000 pupils in the rural schools, according to the 1929 report of the county superintendent. Two hundred and sixteen teachers direct them. There are 129 schools with one teacher, and five with two. This does not include Brush college district, in a class by itself with two buildings having nine rooms and nine teachers.

As the old log school houses gave way years ago to improved type of buildings, so have the old ways of teaching given way to up to date methods of instruction and supervision. Macon county can be proud of the high standard reached by its rural schools.

A MODERN DAY RURAL SCHOOL
(The Brick School)

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[1] One story, told by the late E. O. Smith, as to the qualifications of early school teachers says that one day neighbors were discussing the attainments of a certain young woman who had just completed a term as teacher. One old man admitted that the teacher was well educated, but said that "she did not know everything, for every time she talked about a 'cheer' she called it a 'chair'."

CHAPTER XXXII

DECATUR SCHOOLS

WHAT was the town of Decatur doing about schools a hundred years ago? In 1829, when the town was laid out, there probably were not enough people around the site of the town to make a school necessary, but by the following year the situation had changed.

The earliest school inside the new town, of which mention has ever been made, was in 1830. Mrs. Marietta Packard King used to tell that when she came in that year school was being held in a small room on South Main street. After the log court house was put into use school was held there in 1831 and 1832, with Daniel McCall as teacher. Probably that continued to be the location for school sessions for several years for we have no mention of other schools until 1839, when the Christian church was rented as a school room.

Nathan L. Krone often mentioned a school held in a house on East William between Franklin and Jackson streets, near the Town branch, which he attended in 1843. He thought the teacher was Thomas H. Rogers. Others have mentioned Lemuel Allen and Miss Fordyce as having taught in that building. When that school house burned down a house on Jackson street was secured.[1]

In 1842 citizens were discussing the matter of a school building and a plan was made whereby the Masons would join them in the undertaking. As a result a two story building was erected at the corner of Water and North Park streets, the lower room being used for a school and the upper room for a lodge room. This was really Decatur's first school building. In 1856 the school trustees sold their share in the property to the Masons.

PRIVATE SCHOOLS

For twenty-five years Decatur had only subscription and private schools. One of the best known and most influential private schools was conducted by Mrs. Almira Avery Powers. She began teaching in 1849. Mrs. Powers had been a teacher before her marriage. Her sister, Miss Maria Giles, had been teaching a class of young women in a room on Franklin street. Mrs. Powers taught for seven years, first in her home, later in the Masonic temple and in a brick building on West North street. Many have been the tributes paid to the influence of Mrs. Powers as a teacher in those days.

After Mrs. Powers gave up her school, Miss Tempy Short of Quincy became principal of a school here.

Another school which stands out prominently in early history was the school conducted by Rev. John W. Coleman, in the basement of the First Methodist church, which stood at Prairie and Water streets. The school was started in 1855 and continued until just before Christmas, 1857.

Subjects of high school grade were offered in the Coleman school. It became a flourishing institution, and Mr. Coleman had a number of assistant teachers. They were his wife, Mrs. Nancy Ela Coleman, her sister, Miss Maria Ela; Miss Lyda Powell and W. Bramwell Powell. The latter became the father of the famous violinist, Maud Powell.

Mr. Coleman was considered one of the most remarkable teachers Decatur has ever had, though his school lasted for a comparatively short time. He was obliged to discontinue it because of ill health. When he closed his school he held a school exhibition in the Powers hall, that was such a successful event that it was talked about for years afterwards.

In later years, after Mr. Coleman's health had improved, he was employed as a bookkeeper for Stamper & Condell, merchants, and also served as township collector. He died the day after signing his final report, Feb. 17, 1869.

In the '60s a private school for boys was conducted by Mrs. Ichabod Baldwin on West Main street. This probably was the first exclusive boys' school.

Decatur was one of the first school districts in Illinois to take advantage of the Act of 1849, which gave a district authority to vote a local tax for school support. In 1851 a tax of ten cents on the $100 assessed valuation was voted for the repair of the "brick school house." This is supposed to have been the building occupied jointly with the Masons. The vote was 30 to 12.

PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Public school history of Decatur begins with the passage of the school law Feb. 15, 1855, which provides for the taxing of all the people of the state for the education of all children in the state, and requiring that all the districts maintain schools free to the children for at least six months of each year. That year tax was levied in Decatur district for the purpose of building a school house. As a result, Decatur had its first building erected exclusively as a public school. It was located at the northwest corner of Church and North streets and was known as the Big Brick. Today the site is occupied by the E. A. Gastman school.

THE "BIG BRICK"

The site at that corner was purchased June 19, 1855, for $800 from Elisha D. Carter and Christiana, his wife. It is described as lots 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, Block 8, Bandy's addition.

The new school building was started the next year by the directors, J. J. Peddecord, E. O. Smith and P. B. Shepherd. On the first floor were two good sized rooms, with recitation room adjoining each, and on the second floor were one large room and two small recitation rooms. The new building was opened in the fall of 1857, with J. H. Remsburg as principal and David L. Bunn and Helen E. Parsons as assistants upstairs. Remsburg had previously conducted a private school. In 1879 an addition was made to the Big Brick.

The Decatur school district received a gift of a lot for school purposes, but never used the lot as a school site. The gift came from David L. Allen, who conveyed to the district April 14, 1856, Lot 1, Block 3, Allen, McReynolds & Co.'s addition, and 10 feet of the west side of Lot 4 of the same block. This was the site now occupied by the Citizens bank.

When Decatur was laid out, a lot was reserved for school purposes, but there is no record to show that it was ever so used.

The lot, which was the gift of Captain Allen, was sold Dec. 2, 1856, to Macon lodge, No. 8, A. F. and A. M., for $1,000.

The first meeting of the school board of directors, of which record has been preserved, was held Nov. 30, 1858, members present being A. T. Hill and J. P. Boyd. It was determined at that meeting to open a school in the lower room of the Masonic building. Evidently school enrollment was growing. Miss Mary C. Bassett of Maroa was engaged as teacher of the new room and her salary was to be $35 a month. Besides teaching, she was expected to build the fires and keep the room in order.

The first report now available on school enrollment was made Dec. 2, 1858. It showed the following figures:

First ward—D. L. Bunn, 140 scholars.
First ward—Miss M. C. Bassett, 27 scholars.

Second ward—J. A. Johnson, 150 scholars.
Second ward—Assistant, Miss Sarah Wilder, 80 scholars.
Second ward—Assistant, Miss Ela, 105 scholars.
Fourth Ward—Miss Juliet M. Bradley, 30 scholars.
Second ward—Miss Roe, sick and unable to be in school.

In 1859 the directors, Messrs. Hill, Swingley and Boyd, published the wage scale of Decatur schools. At that time the principal, D. L. Bunn, was receiving $330 salary for six months, and J. A. Johnson $500 for six months. Two women teachers were being paid $40 a month and the others $30 a month.

That year school was being held in the following buildings: the Big Brick, the marble shop (gun store), the Masonic hall, the Houck house (P. D. and E freight house), and the Risdon house in the western part of the city. The school in the gunshop was discontinued when a two story frame building at the corner of Franklin and North Park was rented from Captain Allen in 1859.

Text books in use were:

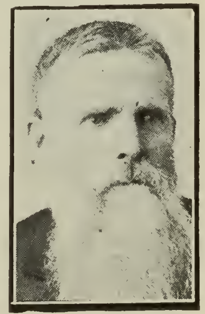
Webster's Elementary Spelling Book.
McGuffey's New Series of Readers.
Wells' English Grammar.
Mitchell's First Lessons.
Primary and Common School Geographies.
Lossing's Primary and Pictorial History of the United States.
Payson, Dunton and Scribner's System of Penmanship.

School enrollment continued to increase and it was difficult to find rooms for school purposes. Basements of the Methodist, Presbyterian and Baptist churches were rented.

E. A. GASTMAN

One day in 1860 a man came down from Hudson, Ill., and asked for a job as school teacher. He was hired as the principal of the primary department at the Big Brick. The board then was composed of A. T. Hill, S. K. Swingley and Dr. E. W. Moore.

That was the beginning of a life sentence for Enoch A. Gastman in the Decatur schools. The following year he was made head of the high school, and superintendent of schools, a position he held the rest of his life. His term of service as superintendent was the longest in the history of American schools, 46 years. With Mr. Gastman's constructive leadership, the Decatur schools were brought to a high degree of efficiency. He was a wise and conservative director of education, keen minded—the type needed in a fast growing city.

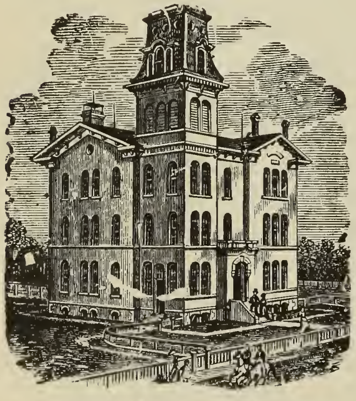

E. A. GASTMAN

The need for something different in school government was recognized and Decatur asked the legislature for a special charter, designed after the charter previously granted Rock Island. The school law then in effect was designed especially for rural schools and was not adequate for a growing city. The bill for the special charter was introduced by Isaac C. Pugh of Decatur, then serving as representative. It passed both houses and was approved by Governor Oglesby Feb. 16, 1865. This charter provides for a school board of three members, elected from the district at large. The Decatur schools have been operated under this charter until the present day. The first board, under the new charter, was composed of William L. Hammer, David P. Bunn and Caleb C. Burroughs.

Decatur's next school building, after the Big Brick, was the Third ward school, afterwards known as the Wood street school, and later replaced by the Mary W. French school. The first two rooms of this building were erected in 1863. The Jones school on North Water street was constructed in 1864. In 1866 the Fourth ward (Jackson street) school was built, and in 1867 the First ward (Sangamon street) building was erected.

Contract for the first unit of the high school building, which stood for many years at North and Broadway streets, was let in 1868, and the building was occupied in September, 1869. Since 1862 high school sessions had been conducted first in the Big Brick, then in the basement of the Baptist church.

The first session of high school was held Sept. 22, 1862, in the east room of the Big Brick.[2] E. A. Gastman was principal, and thirty-nine pupils were enrolled. The first high school commencement exercises were held June 20, 1867, at Powers hall. There were four graduates, all girls. They were Emma Hummell, Rachel Hummell, Alice Roberts and Emmaretta Williams.


FIRST HIGH SCHOOL

In 1869 Miss Mary W. French began her long and successful career as a teacher, retiring in 1912.

In 1870 S. S. Jack was named high school principal, and Mr. Gastman gave all his time to the superintendency of schools. Since the days of Mr. Jack, the following have served as high school principal: Oscar F. McKim, I. E. Brown, J. N. Wilkinson, John W. Gibson, Walter A. Edwards, C. M. McMahon, Louis B. Lee, James J. Sheppard, Frank Hamsher, Sheridan W.

Ehrman, Jesse H. Newlon, Thomas M. Deam, Otto Weedman, and R. C. Sayre.

Decatur school officials have always found difficulty in keeping up with the fast growing school population. One building after another has followed in quick successsion. Other school structures erected before 1900 were the Jasper street, 1882, Marietta street, 1884, Warren, 1890, H. B. Durfee, 1892, Pugh, 1895, and Oakland, 1896 Some of the earlier buildings have given way to newer and more modern structures. The E. A. Gastman school now occupies the site of the Big Brick. Sangamon, Jackson and Jasper schools and the old high school building are no more, their places being taken by new buildings in more advantageous locations. Marietta school was replaced by the new Lincoln school. Additions have been made to many of the original buildings still in use.

New school buildings erected since 1900 are E. A. Gastman, Roach, Dennis, Ullrich, Roosevelt junior high, Washington, Johns Hill junior high, Centennial junior high, Riverside, Garfield, Oglesby, U. S. Grant, Mary W. French, Lincoln and Decatur high school. All are in keeping with the advance of Decatur as a city.

Some of the former prominent school board members have been remembered in naming schools. They were H. B. Durfee, John K. Warren, James G. Roach, and John Ullrich. Pugh school was named after General Isaac C. Pugh, and E. A. Gastman after the man who served so long and so successfully as superintendent of schools. Oglesby school was named for Richard J. Oglesby, war general, governor and senator.

The first woman member of the Decatur board of education was Mrs. Isabella T. Stafford, who served from 1892 to 1895. Since then there has always been a woman on the board.

Decatur school pupils today number 10,600, and teachers 354. An important feature of school life today is the work of the Parent-Teachers associations. Each school has its own organization, and together they make up the city association.

Superintendent E. A. Gastman passed away in 1907, shortly after he retired from the position of head of the Decatur school system. Superintendents which have followed him, H. B. Wilson, J. O. Engleman, J. J. Richeson and William Harris, have

MRS. ISABELLA T. STAFFORD

continued the wise supervision begun in his time. Decatur's school system today, unexcelled in leadership, teaching force and buildings, is the product of a century of progress.

BUSINESS COLLEGE

In 1884 H. S. DeSoller started a business college in Decatur. In two or three years he sold it to Horatio Nelson, who in August, 1889, sold to G. W. Brown of Jacksonville. Ever since then it has been known as Brown's Business college. Mr. Brown installed E. P. Irving as principal.

About 1913 Mr. Brown sold the college to Peck and Read of St. Louis, and in 1914 they sold to H. M. Owen, present owner.

Mr. Owen, whose home was in Stonington, came to Decatur in 1891 from Davenport, Ia., and he and Henry D. Goshert of Warsaw, Ind., opened the Decatur Business university in the Syndicate block. In 1894 Mr. Owen succeeded Mr. Irving as principal at Brown's and merged his own school with the college. It is estimated that more than 19,000 young people have attended the business college since its beginning.

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[1] This school building came to its disastrous end, due to the zeal of one of its pupils. It was customary for the boys to take turns at making the fire at the schoolhouse in the mornings. One boy didn't do a very good job at it and was censured for it. He agreed to do better. When his turn came again he remembered that he must make a good fire. He started the blaze and laid on the wood. As the flames leaped up he piled on more wood. But alas, his fire turned out to be too good, for it was more than the chimney could stand, and by the time the other pupils arrived the building was in ashes.

[2] When the high school was opened, it had no library, the only reference books being those that belonged to the principal. This state of affairs existed for several years, while school instructors were wondering how they could secure a library. Finally three teachers, Emily Moeller, Carrie Jamison and Jane Hamand, decided to start the movement by soliciting subscriptions for the purchase of books. A few days of patient canvassing resulted in a total of $1.50 with which to start a library! The principal invested the money in a volume of Cleveland's Compendium of English Literature. That was the beginning of the Decatur high school library.

CHAPTER XXXIII

PAROCHIAL SCHOOLS

DECATUR'S first parochial school was a private school for Catholic children, conducted by Miss Shepherd in the late '50s in a house in the 600 block West Prairie avenue. She left in 1858, and the school was conducted the next year by Miss Barry. Sessions then were held in a house on West Main street. The school was continued there by different teachers until after the Civil war.

After St. Patrick's congregation erected a church building at the corner of East North and Jackson streets, the old frame church building, which had stood in the 700 block West Prairie, was moved to the lot just east of the new church and was turned into a school room. At that time Mr. and Mrs. St. Leger were conducting the school. They left in 1866. That fall Sisters of the Holy Names of Jesus and Mary opened the school under the name of St. Teresa's school, with Sister Ignatius as superior. Their stay was short. Then some sisters from New York, of the Ursuline order, came and taught several years, but finally returned to New York.

Meantime the school enrollment had been growing, and a larger building became necessary. In 1868 the congregation purchased a hotel building in the 400 block on East Eldorado street. At first this building was used as a convent and boarding school for girls, while the boys remained in the former school building. In 1873 the present order of Ursuline sisters came from Alton, led by Mother Teresa Gillespie, and established St. Teresa's academy. The school was incorporated in 1884.

ST. TERESA'S ACADEMY
Erected in 1914.

In 1885 a school building was erected next door to the convent. Both the boys and girls attended school in the new building, but later the increase in attendance made it necessary again to use the convent building for school purposes.

OLD ST. TERESA'S SCHOOL

CONVENT AND SCHOOL

In later years these buildings became inadequate. Then St. Patrick's congregation erected a new parochial school building at the corner of North and Jackson streets, and it was occupied in 1913. That same year the Ursuline sisters started the erection of a new academy building on North Water street at the north edge of the city. School was opened in the new building in 1914, and has continued there since.

In 1930 a new St. Teresa's Catholic high school was erected near the academy. With the opening of school in September, 1930, all high school sessions were moved to the new building.

LUTHERANS

St. Paul's Lutheran school had its beginning in 1870, when Rev. F. W. Kanning came here to the pastorate of the congregation of Lutherans. Immediately on his arrival he started a school in the frame church building on West Wood street then in use. Thirty pupils made up the first school. The pastor did the teaching, and was assisted by several of his pupils. The next pastor, Rev. George Landgraf, continued as teacher, but by 1875 the school had grown so that it was necessary to employ a regular teacher.

The first teacher called was Mr. Ange, who served also as organist and chorister of the church.

In 1880 the congregation erected a new church building and the old frame building was moved to East Prairie street, where it was used for school purposes.

In 1888 a school building was erected on East Orchard street for the Lutheran children of that section of the city. In 1891 there was a division of the church, and the members of the congregation living in the northeast section organized a church of their own, and erected a house of worship on East Orchard street. Within a few years both the old and the new church organizations had erected new school buildings to meet the growing needs of the congregations.

FIRST LUTHERAN CHURCH AND SCHOOL

ST. PAUL'S LUTHERAN PARISH HOUSE TODAY

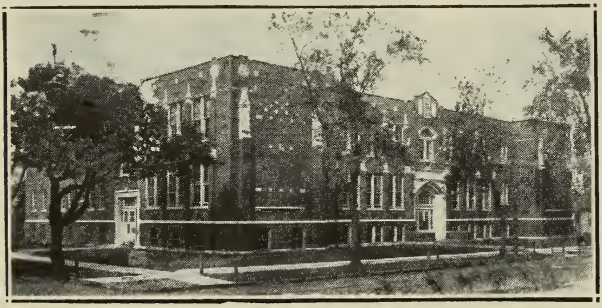
St. Johannes' church, in the northeast part of the city, erected a handsome brick building on East Orchard street in 1898, and St. Paul's church built at the corner of East Prairie and Jackson streets, in 1905. Both schools have continued to grow and large numbers of students have gone out from them. St. Paul's school moved in 1929 to the new parish house erected by the congregation on West Wood street.

ST. JAMES CATHOLIC

St. James Catholic school had its beginnings when Father Joseph Spaeth came to Decatur in 1877 to shepherd the small group of German people who were adherents of the Catholic faith. He at once set about raising money for a building in which the congregation could worship. A room at the rear of the building was turned into a school room. Having no means to pay a teacher at first, Father Spaeth persuaded his brother, Anton, to become the instructor, his pay to be his board, an occasional cigar being thrown in for good measure.

ST. JAMES OLD CHURCH AND SCHOOL

The school continued in the rear room of the church for three years. Then, in the '80s, during the pastorate of Father L. W. Lammert, a rectory and a two story school house were erected on East Clay street by the congregation. That school building was used for many years. St. James' church erected a new house of worship in 1912 and as soon as the debt on that building was erased, plans began making for a new school. These culminated in 1925 in the erection and dedication of the handsome $150,000 school and community center on South Webster street, in use today.



ST. JAMES SCHOOL TODAY

ST. THOMAS CATHOLIC

Decatur's newest parochial school is the school connected with the new St. Thomas Catholic church on North Edward street. This school was opened in September, 1926.

ADVENTIST

The Seventh Day Adventist church for some years has maintained a school for the children of its members. It occupies a frame building in the 700 block West Marietta street.

CHAPTER XXXIV

FRATERNAL ORGANIZATIONS

THE first fraternal order in Decatur was the Masonic, which began with the institution of Macon lodge, No. 8, A. F. and A. M., July 17, 1841. It was the first lodge to be started under the jurisdiction of the present Grand Lodge of Illinois, though it was the eighth to receive its charter.

The charter members were:

George A. Patterson, Worshipful Master[1]; Joseph King, Senior Warden; William Lefforge, Junior Warden; Henry Prather, Secretary and treasurer; Elijah League, Senior Deacon; Leonard Ashton, Junior Deacon; James Ashton, Steward and Tyler.

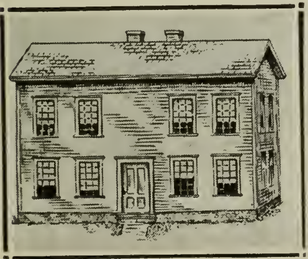
Master Masons—Warner W. Oglesby, Henry Hummell, and Joel Seth Post.

Entered apprentices—John P. Tinbrook and Andrew S. Williams.

The lodge met at first in a two story frame house on the north side of the 100 block East Wood street. This house had been built by Jacob Spangler as a home for himself and his bride, but just before the time set for the wedding the young woman died. Mr. Spangler then rented the house.

In 1842 the Masons were discussing the matter of a meeting place. At the same time Decatur citizens were proposing to build a school house. The Masons were asked to join in the move, building an upper story to the school house to use as a lodge room. This plan was carried out. The cornerstone for the new building was laid June 24, 1842. The building stood at Water and North Park streets, facing south.

Masonic bodies increased in number in the fifties. Macon chapter, No. 21, Royal Arch Masons, was chartered Sept. 29, 1854, with nine charter members. They were: D. P. Bunn, W. H. Ennis, J. R. Gorin, Josiah Hunt, Warner W. Oglesby, Henry Prather, J. J. Peddecord, J. C. Weaver, Joseph King.



FIRST MASONIC HOME

Beaumanior Commandery No. 9, first called Centre Encampment, U. D. (under dispensation), and then called Central Encampment, had its beginning July 22, 1856.

The name was changed to Beaumanior Commandery in 1860. This commandery attended the burial of Abraham Lincoln in Springfield in May, 1865. It also assisted at the laying of the cornerstone of the state house in Springfield.

Ionic lodge, No. 312, A. F. and A. M., came into being Nov. 10, 1859. The charter members were A. B. Bunn, D. W. C. Hardy, Joseph Lowenstein, George Goodman, G. R. Moffett, S. S. Good, and J. M. Lowry.

Decatur Council No. 16, Royal and Select Masters, was chartered Oct. 7, 1864.

The Masons found they were needing more room, and accordingly early in 1863 they arranged for the use of rooms on the third floor of a building owned by Dr. J. B. T. Stapp, and the adjacent building owned by Elisha D. Carter. These buildings were in the 100 block North Water street.

Again more room was needed, and a new building was discussed. Macon lodge sold its property at Water and Park streets to James W. and George D. Haworth on Nov. 6, 1881, for $14,000. Soon afterwards a lot at the southeast corner of Water and William streets was purchased from James S. Carter for $4,500. Contract for a new four-story building was let to M. G. Patterson for $16,233. Laying of the cornerstone for this building on Aug. 10, 1882, was one of the biggest events in Masonic history. In the building was placed the cornerstone from the former building at Water and North Park streets.

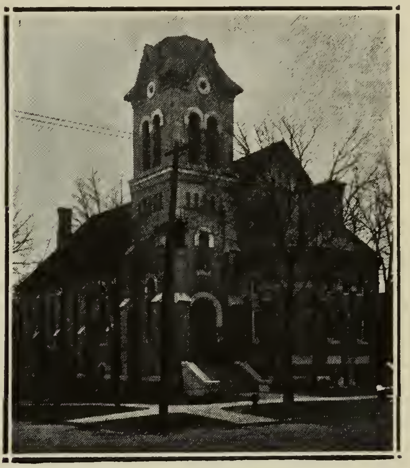
Life memberships were voted June 1, 1883, to Jerome R. Gorin, John Hatfield, William L. Hammer, M. G. Patterson, William H. Gipson, David L. Hughes, James L. Peake, Dewitt C. Shockley and George Dempsey, in appreciation of time and services given in the erection of the new building. Bestowing of such honor has never occurred again, since the grand lodge soon after that adopted by-laws prohibiting life memberships.

In 1896 the Masons found it advisable to make another change in headquarters and moved to the Loeb building in the 300 block North Water street. Ten years later, in 1906, they purchased the Methodist church building at Eldorado and Franklin streets, formerly known as Stapp's chapel. The

FIRST MASONIC TEMPLE

Masons remodeled the structure, and named it Eldorado temple. This was their home until 1929.

SECOND MASONIC TEMPLE

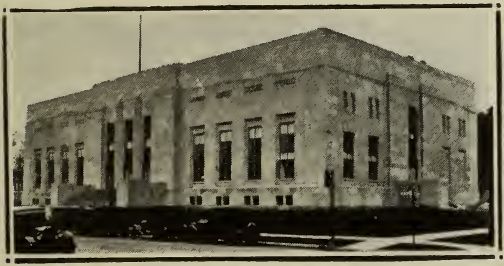


ELDORADO TEMPLE

Meantime the Masons were growing stronger, and new lodges were organized. Stephen Decatur lodge, A. F. and A. M., was organized in 1914, and had its first meeting on Aug. 12. Another new lodge came in 1921 with the organization of Great Light lodge on May 4.

NEW TEMPLE

For years the Masonic bodies discussed the idea of erecting a temple to house all their activities. This discussion crystallized in the organization in 1923 of the Decatur Masonic Temple association. All the lodges conveyed their property to the new association, and drives for funds were made among the members. As a result the new temple, located at William and Church streets, was erected at a cost of $850,000. The temple was dedicated Feb. 8, 1929, by Grand Master Louis L. Emmerson.



NEW MASONIC TEMPLE

Decatur chapter, 111 O. E. S. was instituted Sept. 9, 1887, in the Masonic temple at Water and William streets. Thirteen wives of Masons became members. First worthy matron was Mrs. Lavonne Y. Hildreth. A new Eastern Star chapter was organized in 1929, and was named Owen Scott chapter.

A record made by no other man in Decatur was that of Owen Scott, who attended the annual meeting of the Illinois Grand Lodge of Masons for fifty-one consecutive times, the last being in 1928, several months before his death. Since 1921 he had held the office of grand secretary.

Mr. Scott was one of the most widely known Masons of the state. He had held every office in the grand lodge from warden to grand master. He was a member of the board of directors of the George Washington Masonic National Memorial association, organized to erect a memorial to Washington at Alexandria, Va. Besides reaching high positions in the Masonic lodge, Mr. Scott was honored in the same way in other lodges of which he was a member, the Knights of Pythias, Odd Fellows, Order of the Eastern Star, and Order of Red Men.

ODD FELLOWS

The Odd Fellows were the second fraternal body to organize in Decatur. They had their initial meeting Feb. 26, 1850. S. W. Woodward, grand master, had charge of organizing the lodge which became known as Decatur lodge, No 65. The charter members were Samuel K. Thompson, Henry Hummell, J. R. Turner, Benjamin F. Oglesby and John W. Koehler. The meetings were held in Montgomery hall, Water and East Main streets.

At the first lodge meeting Henry B. Durfee was admitted by card. Warner W. Oglesby, E. O. Smith, G. A. Smith, S. W. Carter, Austin McClurg and Charles Mayers were initiated. Officers were elected as follows:

Noble Grand—S. K. Thompson.
Vice Grand—H. B. Durfee.
Recording Secretary—W. W. Oglesby.
Treasurer—E. O. Smith.

Celestial lodge, No. 186, I. O. O. F. was organized Oct. 12, 1855, with the following charter members: W. W. Oglesby, P. D. Kline, S. K. Thompson, Henry P. Elliott, R. F. Jones, Joseph King, James Shoaff, J. L. Peake, A. J. Wolf, C. H. Fuller, George W. Baker, B. H. Cassell, John J. Ballentine.

Decatur Encampment No. 37, I. O. O. F. was organized Dec. 10, 1856, with a charter membership of eight. The charter members were G. A. Smith, Henry Kain, B. F. McCoy, W. T. Peake, Stephen Grimes, Peter Terrell, Alonzo Pierce and Hamilton McCoy.

The Daughters of Rebekah were organized in Decatur Oct. 14, 1873, with nineteen charter members.

PYTHIAN ORPHANS HOME

Isaac W. Ehrman, who came to Decatur in 1853 and started a clothing store, and in later years was in the laundry business, was a member of the Odd Fellows lodge for 66 years. Before his death in 1921 he had the distinction of being the oldest Odd Fellow in the country, in point of years of membership. He was then eighty-six years old and had been a member since he was twenty.

KNIGHTS OF PYTHIAS

Coeur de Leon lodge, Knights of Pythias, was instituted Feb. 22, 1871, only seven years after the foundation of the order. Charter members were B. F. Dodson, B. K. Durfee, M. F. Kanan, W. W. Peddecord, W. W. Mason, E. M. Misner, J. C. Carder, J. F. McChain and A. P. Griswold.

Chevalier Bayard lodge, No. 189, was organized Aug. 10, 1889, as the result of the efforts of Walter Hutchin.

En Ami lodge No. 593 was organized April 4 and 5, 1900, in the office of Dr. C. Taylor Ball, Water and Bradford streets.

The Myrtle Temple No. 2, Pythian Sisters, was started in 1890, through the efforts of Mrs. Mary Winegardner. It was the second such organization in the state.

The Grand Temple of Illinois of Pythian Sisters, which is composed of the highest officials of the various temples in the state, was organized in Decatur in 1892 and Mrs. Hall of Myrtle temple

PYTHIAN OLD FOLKS HOME

was chosen first grand chief. Two other temples of Pythian sisters have been organized in Decatur. They are Decatur temple and Fern Leaf temple.

Decatur was chosen as the location for the state home for aged Pythians, their wives, widows and orphans, which the Grand Lodge of Knights of Pythias voted to establish during its session Oct. 17-19, 1905, held in this city. The cornerstone for the new home in Decatur was laid June 9, 1908, and dedication took place June 9, 1910. The cost of the home was about $160,000.

In 1916 another home was erected four miles north of Decatur. This second building is the home for the aged people, while the first building erected is the home for the children only. The home for the aged cost $50,000. In 1927 an addition costing approximately the same amount was erected.

OTHER LODGES

The Modern Woodmen of America, Decatur camp, No. 144, was organized Dec. 8, 1885, at a meeting at the St. Nicholas hotel. W. C. Rowe camp was organized in 1908, but later merged with Decatur camp. Other camps organized since are Easterly No. 1626 and Commodore No. 3469.

The Red Men were organized in Decatur Sept. 30, 1901, the tribe being known as Sangamon tribe No. 145. This tribe and others organized later went out of existence, but remaining members reorganized. The present tribe is known as Iona tribe.

Triumph Court, Tribe of Ben Hur, was organized June 2, 1896, and Voris court was started in 1921. In 1928 the two were merged, making the largest court in the state at that time.

Decatur lodge, No. 401, B. P. O. E., was organized Dec. 15, 1897. Dr. B. L. Maienthal was first Exalted Ruler. This lodge erected a building of its own at the corner of William and Church streets in 1915, at a cost of about $55,000, and in 1924-5 the lodge erected a country club on the shores of Lake Decatur at a cost of about $40,000.

The Decatur Aerie of Eagles was instituted Oct. 4, 1903. Mont Peniwell was past worthy president, and M. C. Griffin worthy president. On Jan. 23, 1913, the lodge bought the brick building at the northwest corner of Washington and Water streets. It was sold to the city of Decatur in 1925 and remodeled into the present city hall.

The Decatur branch of the Loyal Order of Moose was organized Aug. 3, 1911, with 500 members. T. A. McGarry was first dictator.

In 1916 the Moose erected a club house at Wood and Franklin streets, costing $35,000, and in 1922 built a country club house on the shores of Lake Decatur.

Decatur has many other prosperous fraternal bodies, which are filling well their place in the life of the city.

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[1] George A. Patterson was the man who prepared the petition asking the legislature to form a new county (Piatt county) in 1838. Mr. Patterson lived near what is now Monticello. He surveyed the town of Monticello, was foreman of the first grand jury in Piatt, was county assessor there in 1843 and was a member of the first board of school commissioners.

Mr. Patterson also surveyed many of the additions to Decatur, among them the Allen, McReynolds addition, of which Central park is a part. He was very faithful in attending the lodge meetings in Decatur, though he had to ride horseback through mud for twenty-five miles to get here. Often the grass was so high he would lose the trail.

CHAPTER XXXV

DECATUR IN THE '50s

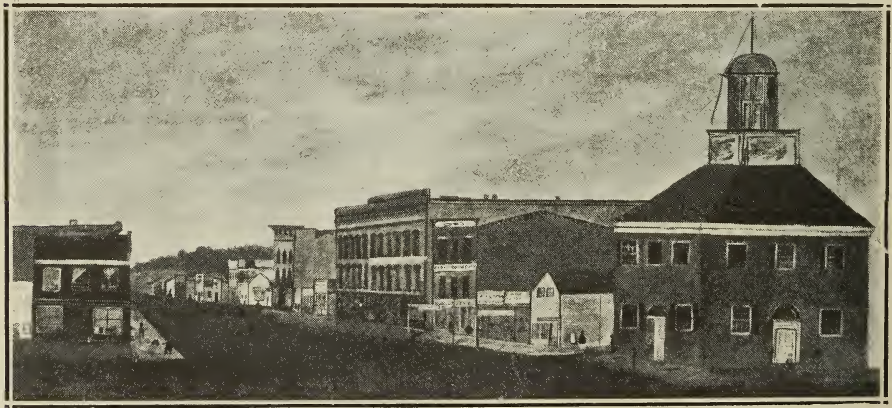
DECATUR presented two different pictures in the fifties. The scene at the beginning of the ten year period was that of a crude, raw village, in which life went on serenely, with nothing to disturb the even tenor of its way. The picture at the end of the period was that of a hustling, busy city, with better homes, with factories, newspapers, railroads, and with wide-awake and enterprising citizens.

That ten year period brought Decatur first of all its railroads. Of almost as much importance, however, were the aggressive citizens, who had come here to make their homes. They started factories, mills, stores, which helped to build up the city.

CITY CHARTER

It was during this period that Decatur realized that it was no more a town, but a city. It had become possessed with ambition and pride. Better times had come and better buildings were being erected. The name of town became too insignificant. Hence, steps were taken to have it incorporated as a city, and when it received its charter in 1855, Decatur became a city in reality.

Imagine, if you can, the appearance of Decatur in the early '50s. Streets were unpaved and undrained, deep in mud in rainy seasons. The only sidewalks were of wood.[1] Loose boards flopped up and down



EAST MAIN STREET IN 1856
Looking east from Lincoln Square. Made from painting by Robert Whitfield of New York state, apprentice under R. F. Jones, painter.

as pedestrians passed along. Hogs were the street scavengers, and the family cow on her way to pasture was a familiar sight. Homes and stores were mostly low one-story structures, a two-story building appearing only occasionally. The business part of town was still confined largely to the original territory platted, bounded by Wood, Church, Prairie and Water streets. The population was in the neighborhood of 600. Mail came only a few times a week. The stage coach was the means of transportation into or out of the town.[2]

Early in the decade came the excitement of the gold rush to California. Dozens of Macon county men left to seek their fortunes in the west. Some returned with money which they invested in land and laid out new additions to the city.

After William Martin began the manufacture of brick in Decatur, brick buildings became more numerous. Some of them are still standing today. They were substantial, large dwellings, or business houses, well constructed. Up to that time brick had been hauled in, mostly from Edgar county.

Mr. Martin came to Decatur in 1852.[3] He thought Decatur clay would make brick, and he took some to St. Louis to have it tested. The brick, which was made from that clay, was brought back to Decatur by Mr. Martin and put on exhibition, labeled "Brick Made from Decatur Clay." The brick was tested in every way and found to be good.

There were no brick makers here. Mr. Martin made another trip to St. Louis, this time returning with wagons loaded with men, household goods, and equipment for making brick. The men were Ben Metz, John Brant, Frank Meyer and Henry Meyer. They were soon busy making brick.

After a time Mr. Martin sold his interest in the new business to Ben Metz. The ground between Broadway and Webster, from Decatur to Lawrence streets, was the site of the brick yard.

The first brick made there were used as a foundation for the barn at the Johns home on Johns Hill, and the Johns house was the first house built out of this Decatur-made brick.

BUSINESS AND INDUSTRIES

Decatur began making progress in a business and industrial way. Kramer and McClelland were making wagons, carriages and buggies, the business having been started by S. B. McClelland in 1854. He later sold his interest to Joseph E. McClelland.

Joseph Mills, long identified with the lumber business in Decatur, came in 1853, and established a lumber yard. He had visited several towns in Illinois, and hearing that Decatur was to have two railroads—more than any other town could boast—he thought it would be a good place to locate. On his way here he had come over the old Northern Cross railroad from Naples to Jacksonville.

Mr. Mills' first building job was the Humphrey house on East Eldorado street, later St. Teresa's academy. During his business career here, he had at different times as partners D. C. Shockley and W. B. Harry.

Mr. Mills sold his lumber business in 1911 to the Lyon Lumber company. He died in 1913.

Theodore Hildebrandt came to Decatur in 1853 and began work for Dr. W. A. Barnes in his drug store. For fifty-six years afterwards he was identified with the drug business here, having a store of his own for many years.

The Henkle and Condell mill, known as the Illinois Central mill, was built in 1855 at Main and Broadway. In 1859 it burned, but was rebuilt by Henkle, Shellabarger and Priest, who had purchased it. Priest and Company afterwards ran this mill.

Gus A. Smith was conducting a buggy factory, and employed fifty men, probably more than any other factory here then. He shipped buggies to the far west and south.

Among stores which were established were I. W. Ehrman's clothing and tailor shop, W. F. Busher's shoe store, Peake's jewelry store, the Imboden market, and City Book store.

J. G. Starr, in 1856, started a harness shop which in later years sold goods all over the United States. Mr. Starr died in 1878, the business being carried on by his three sons, W. H., J. S. and Harry Starr. They were succeeded by C. A. and W. C. Starr, grandsons of J. G. Starr. Now it is an automobile business, the automobile having crowded out the harness and buggy.

T. Richard and A. Keck started the manufacture of beer in 1856, selling out in 1862 to Edward Harpstrite and Henry Shlaudeman. The plant was located at Broadway and Cantrell, and became known as the Decatur Steam brewery.

The Morehouse & Wells store was opened in 1859, by S. P. Morehouse and W. T. Wells. Later Mr. Morehouse was succeeded by his son, George E. Morehouse. In 1882 C. M. Hurst and H. H. Bishop entered the firm.

Hieronymus Mueller opened a gunsmith and repair shop in 1858.

The Decatur Woolen Mills, which became one of Decatur's leading industries, were started in 1859, by Boyd, Haskell and Company.

The members of the firm were William H. Boyd of Maryland, L. C. Haskell of New York, and W. J. Myers of Pennsylvania. The firm made blankets, jeans, yarns, flannels and other articles of wool, and did carding and spinning. For a time the annual output was $75,000. In 1868 the mills were destroyed by fire, but were rebuilt. The building is now part of the Walrus Manufacturing company plant.

In 1856 Swingley and Amos started a lumber business which was sold later to C. P. Thatcher, who in turn sold to Gaddis and Huff.

The Messrs. Swingley, Kaufman and Amos erected a mill in 1857 at the corner of Water street and the Great Western railroad. It was known as the Great Western mill. Later it became the nucleus of the Shellabarger mill.

What is now the Curtis jewelry store was started in 1858 by S. D. Lilliston, who continued business until 1869. Otto E. Curtis was the next owner. In 1885 the firm became Otto E. Curtis and Brother, and in 1899 it became the Frank Curtis company. Now it is owned by Walter Flora.

John R. Race, whose name was connected with the clothing business for fifty years, came in 1855. He started a store in 1857. Later his brother, James W. Race, and Casper Elwood became partners and the firm name was J. R. Race & Co. In 1889 the Race Clothing Manufacturing company was organized, and it continued in business until 1904.

David Martin started a lime and brick yard in Decatur in 1858, later selling cement also, and the business has continued until the present, now being owned by Macknet and Waggoner. As far back as 1842 Mr. Martin had a lime kiln in Christian county, about 28 miles from Decatur, and sold a great deal of lime in Macon county. In 1853 he moved to Alton, and then in 1858 came to Decatur. He put down a block of cement street paving in Morgan street, north from Cerro Gordo, the first concrete street paving in Decatur. That was about 1885 or 1886.

Mr. Martin also erected the first house made of concrete blocks. It was in the 500 block East Cerro Gordo street, south side.

John McGinnes, Decatur's first stenographer and one of eight in the country at that time, came to Decatur in the early '50s to become bookkeeper for Stamper & Condell, and for years afterwards was identified with the business life of Decatur as bank cashier and merchant. He said he once made a shorthand report of a speech by Abraham Lincoln in a famous murder case tried in Powers hall. Mr. McGinnes built an elevator at what is now Elwin, called the place

Wheatland, and shipped from there the first shelled corn sent out of the county. The name of the place was changed to Elwin when it was found there already was a Wheatland in Illinois.

Decatur men were fond of their cigars and Joseph Michl began making them in 1858 to supply their needs. His name is still represented in Joseph Michl's Sons.

James B. Shoaff started the newspaper business in Decatur in 1851 when he established the Shoaff's Weekly Gazette. In 1855 Usrey and Wingate began publishing the Chronicle. The Democrat, Herald and Magnet were other newspapers started a little later.

The fair grounds, which later became Fairview park, were laid out in 1857. State and county fairs were held there.

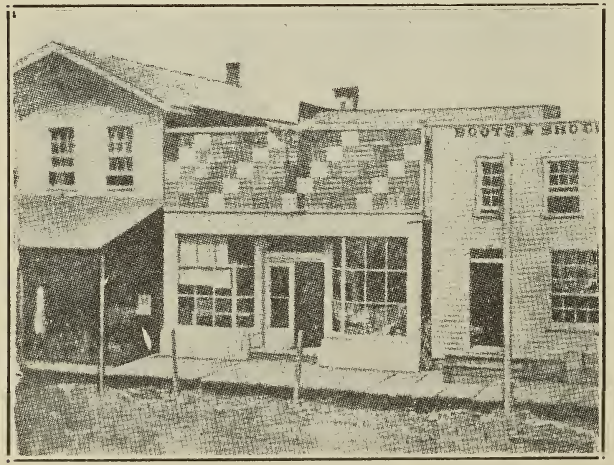
Substantial brick business buildings began to appear during this period in Decatur. One of the first was the block on East Main street, south side of the 100 block, which was erected by William Powers in 1856. They were three stories in height, and Decatur was quite proud of them. Mr. Powers also erected a building at the southeast corner of East Main and Water streets in 1856, and James Millikin put up one across the street in 1858.

Among other prominent citizens who came to Decatur during this decade and who afterwards were identified with the business life and history of the city were Franklin Priest, Charles Laux, John K. Warren, D. S. Shellabarger, John Ullrich, George S. Durfee, E. A. Jones, E. McNabb, Martin P. Murphey, John Imboden, William L. Hammer, L. L. Burrows, Dr. J. B. T. Stapp and G. W. Bright.

Frederick Mattes arrived and was soon in the business of making brick. His family is still in that business.

Among the physicians who came were Dr. W. A. Barnes, father of the late Dr. William Barnes; Dr. E. W. Moore, Dr. Samuel McBride, and Dr. W. J. Chenoweth.

One man who



SCENE ON EAST MAIN IN THE 50s'
Site now occupied by the Millikin bank.

afterwards became famous as an inventor came. That was W. H. Bramble, inventor of a cultivator, grain scale, Yale lock, postoffice lock box, and other articles. Mr. Bramble invented many different kinds of locks.

SOCIETY

We begin reading of Decatur "society" in the '50s. The influx of well-to-do and cultured people from the east added much to the social atmosphere of the city Balls, parties, entertainments, made the town gay. Amateur performances of histrionic and musical nature were popular, according to Mrs. Jane M. Johns.

The anxious young suitor of the day serenaded his lady love beneath her window in true romantic fashion. It usually took an entire group to do the serenading, however, and one bunch in particular took along a melodeon to add to the harmony. This "glee club" was composed of George Wessels, Bob McCabe, Theodore Hildebrandt, Frank Hays and Will Martin. Wessels, noted as a singer, was the leader of the crowd. Other prominent young men of the period were Charles Tuttle, Sheridan Wait, Richard J. Oglesby, J. Y. Braden, W. H. Ennis, William T. Wells and Charles P. Thatcher. Dick Oglesby was becoming popular as a speaker, especially after his tour abroad. William Ennis became one of the county's most extensive land owners, acquiring thousands of acres. He married Miss Louie Harrison, one of the popular young women of the time.

A big social event of the '50s was a masked ball in 1855 for the benefit of the poor. It was held in The Revere house. The profits went to the destitute widow of one of the railroad workmen.

TURNVEREIN

The Decatur Turnverein, organized Feb. 28, 1858, was an active athletic and social organization, which flourished for many years. John Ruhl was the first president. In 1887 the organization bought Turner park on South Broadway, and about 1889 erected a building there. By 1894 the society had 200 members and property worth from $16,000 to $20,000. It promoted athletics, principally fencing, boxing, wrestling, etc., and won honors in tournaments, including the national meet at Milwaukee in 1893. The Turnverein went out of existence soon after 1910.

The property of this society is now the Girls' Welfare home.

CEMETERY ASSOCIATION

The Greenwood cemetery association was organized March 27, 1857, by electing William Martin, Sr., president, Nathan W. Tupper, treasurer, John Ricketts, David L. Allen and Daniel C. Lockwood directors. Henry Prather was the man credited with the beautiful arrangement of the cemetery grounds and the improvements made on them. For several years prior to his death in 1869 he was president of the association. Bodies had been buried in that location as early as 1839 or 1840. Many were removed there from King's cemetery, when that land was laid off in town lots.

Decatur had its first big fire in 1859, when a block of frame buildings on East Main and Water streets burned.[4] Three-story brick buildings arose in their places.

CHURCH AND SCHOOL

The period during the '50s was active in school and church lines. It was during that time that public schools had their start, as told in another chapter, and Decatur had its first real public school building, the Big Brick.

A number of churches were organized. The First Presbyterian church had its beginning at a meeting May 1, 1852, at the home of Samuel Powers. In 1855 a frame building was erected on East Main street, and in 1856 the church began the construction of a brick building on West Prairie, the site now occupied by the Y. M. C. A. It was not completed until 1859. That building was used until the present building was erected in 1890-91, during the pastorate of Rev. W. H. Penhallegon.

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
Built in 1856.

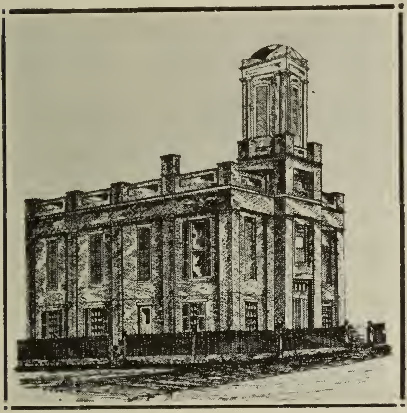
The Antioch Baptist church was organized in 1858, with fourteen members.

The United Brethren church was started in 1856 by Rev. M. Ambrose, with seven members.

The Universalist church, now extinct, was organized in 1854 by Rev. D. P. Bunn with nine charter members. A house of worship was erected in the 100 block East Prairie street, and it was enlarged in 1876.

The Church of God was organized in May, 1857, by Elder A. J. Fenton, with eleven charter members.

St. Patrick's Catholic church was organized in 1854. Its first church house was a frame building in the 700 block West Prairie. It was erected in 1857 by Father Prendergast. .



SECOND METHODIST CHURCH BUILDING

St. John's Episcopal church was organized in 1855, with fifteen members.

In 1852 the Methodist church purchased for $150 a lot at the northwest corner of Prairie and Water streets, formerly the site of the jail, and work began on a new brick building. It was completed and dedicated in 1854.[5] An innovation was an organ, despite vigorous protestations of Rev. Peter Cartwright, who called it a "work of the devil."

The Baptist church erected a brick house of worship at the corner of Water and William streets. It was dedicated Dec. 27, 1857.

The Christian church also erected a new brick house of worship at the corner of North Main and North streets.

Back in the '50s the subject of temperance was being agitated. In 1855 Macon county voted by a majority of 83 for a tax on whisky, in the state-wide referendum, although the proposition failed to carry in the state. The Illinois State Chronicle, Decatur newspaper, at that time reported that "Glorious old Macon county has done her work."

In 1856 took place the meeting at the Cassell house, where steps were first taken toward the organization of the Republican party in Illinois. It was a meeting of editors opposed to the Nebraska bill, the topic of interest of the day.

Decatur's population according to the census of 1860 was 3,849. Decatur by that time had a good start toward becoming a real city.

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[1] 1The first brick sidewalk, according to N. L. Krone, was laid in 1856. It was around what is now the Bachrach corner on Lincoln Square.

[2] Frank L. Hays, who first came to Decatur in 1855, said that when the stage drew up in front of the Harrell house with a great flourish, nearly all the male inhabitants of the town were out to meet it. Most of the men in the crowd were barefoot. It was a new sight to Mr. Hays to see a crowd of grown-up men in their bare feet.

The Stamper and Condell store, which was started in Decatur in 1843, was then at the northeast corner of Lincoln square, in a two story brick building twenty feet wide. That building can be seen in the illustration, "East Main Street in 1856". It was one of two brick buildings here at the time, and was known as the Brick store. The firm later secured twenty feet more of ground to the north and erected a new building. For many years this was the leading store in Decatur. The firm dissolved about 1870.

The picture on Page 188 also shows other stores of the '50s. Immediately east of the court house (the building at the extreme right of the picture) was the Roberts drug store in the little frame building which stood on the present site of the West drug store building. In the first three-story building beyond was the Gazette office. This building (still standing) is believed to be the oldest three-story building in Decatur. Immediately beyond that building is the Powers block. In one of the small buildings east of that block was the Barnes drug store. The brick building at the corner (still standing) housed the Griswold hardware store. Across the street, east, was Tom Albert's restaurant.

[3] William Martin had a packing house in Decatur and introduced sugar cured hams and bacon. Martin's sugar cured hams gained a reputation all over the country.

[4] The fire of Dec. 30, 1859, started in Lowenstein & Bros. Young America clothing store on East Main street, then spread to Wingate's New York store, John Holsworth's bakery on East Main, and to James Faust's hat and cap store on Water street. On the west it reached William Scanlan's clothing store, Fuller and Benton's Auction store and George Goodman's grocery. The total loss was around $30,000. Four of the buildings belonged to J. F. Montgomery, and he had no insurance on them. C. H. Fuller and Goodman & Baker were other losers.

After the fire the Weekly Gazette said: "Let us wake up. Let the city council appoint fire wardens, prepare ladders, and buckets and build cisterns, and be ready to protect our people against another such calamity."

[5] When the second Methodist church was built, a furnace was installed It was the first furnace in Decatur.

CHAPTER XXXVI

NEWSPAPERS

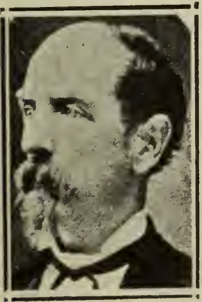
ONE spring day in the year 1851 a man boarded the stage in Bloomington and rode to Decatur to give the place the "once-over". He had heard about Decatur and decided to look it over before determining on a location to establish his business. He liked the town. He was encouraged by Decatur citizens to locate here. In fact, he was told that Decatur needed a business of his kind, and he was urged to come.

In a short time the man, whose name was James B. Shoaff, was back again with his "plant" loaded on a wagon.[1] It was soon set up. It turned out its first product June 26, 1851.

Decatur had made another stride. The first product of that plant was Decatur's first newspaper issue, and nearly all Decatur turned out to get a copy as it came from the press. Since that day to this, Decatur has never been without a newspaper.

Shoaff's Family Gazette was the name of the first newspaper published in this city. James B. Shoaff was the owner, managing editor, reporter, circulation manager, advertising force, printer, all in one. A newspaper outfit in that day was not as extensive as one today. A hand press, a case of type and a few odds and ends of equipment were all that was necessary.

The first copies of that paper, still damp from the press, were literally grabbed by the citizens of Decatur. It was a big day for Decatur when it became a city with a newspaper of its own. It had struggled along more than twenty years without one, but the need for a medium of disseminating news had been keenly felt.



JAMES B. SHOAFF

It was a good paper, too, which Mr. Shoaff issued. A perusal of a few copies which are still extant will prove this statement. The paper was newsy and interesting. Mr. Shoaff announced that his advertising rates would be $18 a year for a half column, and $28 for a full column. The subscription price of the paper was $1.50 a year if paid in advance; otherwise $2 a year. Mr. Shoaff arranged for agents in other cities, Urbana, Taylorville, Bloomington, Clinton, Shelbyville, Jacksonville, Pekin, Mt. Pulaski, Charleston, Sullivan and other places, and soon had a good subscription list. The press was set up in what was called "Sons Hall".

Mr. Shoaff had worked as a journeyman printer in most of the towns in this section of Illinois, and then had acquired a newspaper outfit of his own.

Mr. Shoaff was born in Williamsport, Md. When living in Charleston he had met and married Nancy Hanks, daughter of Dennis Hanks and niece of the mother of Abraham Lincoln.

There was one man in town who wasn't pleased when James Shoaff started his newspaper here. He was William J. Usrey. His reason for not liking the newcomer was that he had intended to start a newspaper himself, but Mr. Shoaff beat him to it. Feeling that there was not room in Decatur for two papers at that time, Usrey waited. Finally in 1855 he and Charles H. Wingate started the Illinois State Chronicle.

After Mr. Shoaff had published his paper for three years under the name of Shoaff's Family Gazette he changed the name of it to Decatur Weekly Gazette. Under that head it was continued until 1856, and then Mr. Shoaff sold the paper. It passed through several different hands during the next nine years, and finally the good will and subscription list were sold to the Chronicle. That was in 1865. The paper issued then was called the Gazette-Chronicle.

Mr. Shoaff entered the drygoods business, but later returned to the newspaper business, issuing the Magnet. He also published newspapers in other towns, and was in the Civil war, returning to Decatur again to run the Magnet. He remained here several years and then moved to Paris where he published the Gazette. He died there in 1874. A son, Thomas B. Shoaff, is now publishing the Leader at Shelbyville.

MANY OTHERS STARTED

Since 1851 more than forty newspapers have been started in Macon county, most of them in Decatur. Some were in existence only a few months, some a few years, some were started for campaign seasons only. In those days a newspaper outfit did not cost much, and it was not a big undertaking to start a paper. It was a bigger proposition to keep one going. They didn't make much money. Some did not make any, and went to the wall.

William Stanley and J. R. Mosser started on Aug. 1, 1867, the Daily Republican which had a long and honorable career. Stanley sold his interest to B. K. Hamsher and the paper was conducted a long time by Mosser and Hamsher. When Mr. Mosser died W. F. Calhoun went into the firm.

Alfred F. Wuench leased a printing office in 1871. On the first Thursday in April, 1872, the first issue of the Weekly Decatur Review appeared. It was the beginning of the present day Review. The paper was started by Alfred Wuench, who conducted it for two years. Then it was published for a year by John Lindsay and D. J. Block. After Block left, Alfred F. Wuench, son of the founder, came into the business and the paper was headed by Lindsay and Wuench until June 1, 1876, when it was sold to W. H. Bayne. In November, 1876, he began to issue a daily paper, but the daily continued only two months. About two years later, on Oct. 1, 1878, publication of a daily was resumed, and has continued up to the present time.

The Review was sold to S. S. Jack, July 23, 1880. He sold a half interest to W. J. Mize and company. They sold out to a stock company, called The Review Publishing company, which was composed of W. J. Mize, G. W. Mize, Robert Mize, A Sterns and Charles Sterns. In 1887 they sold to R. E. Pratt and W. F. Thompson, who, in turn, sold it in August, 1888, to J. P. Drennan and Jerry Donahue. In 1891 H. C. Schaub became a member of the company. The paper has continued under that management until the present time.

The Saturday Herald was started Oct. 11, 1879, by C. N. Walls, formerly of the Tuscola Journal. The next publishers were H. W. Rowell and W. H. Addis. After them came E. S. Ela and Virgil N. Hostetler. Mr. Ela was soon succeeded by Frank H. Hall. Hall and Hostetler published the paper for several years. It was consolidated about 1890 with the Decatur Despatch, which had been started the year previous by W. F. Calhoun. The paper then was called the Herald-Despatch. Mr. Calhoun soon afterwards went to the Republican with B. K. Hamsher.

A plan was worked out in 1899 by the newspapers whereby the Republican circulation would go to The Review and that paper would change from a morning to afternoon and Sunday publication, and the Herald-Despatch would occupy the morning newspaper field alone. After a time the Herald-Despatch bought out the News, which had succeeded the Daily Bulletin, long owned by John Lindsay. The paper then became known as The Herald and has continued under that name, though the personnel of the company has changed. Frank M. Lindsay, son of John Lindsay, mentioned above, is now president, and W. F. Hardy is editor.

The last attempt to start a new daily newspaper in Decatur was in 1909. It was the Decatur World, which lasted for twenty-nine days.

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[1] Mr. Shoaff, by the way, got stuck in the mud on his way to Decatur with his newspaper "plant". Fortunately Berry H. Cassell and Henry Hummell came driving along and helped him out of his predicament, with the aid of their horse.

CHAPTER XXXVII

THE MEDICAL SOCIETY

FAILING to pay the doctor's bill when medical attention was required and then going to a different physician the next time, and treating him the same way, seemed to have been a habit with folks back in the sixties, and as a result the Macon County Medical society decided to do something about it.

Resolutions passed by the doctors at a meeting held in the office of Dr. Crain, March 16, 1863, with Dr. G. W. McMillin presiding, stated that henceforth "we will not longer tolerate that old established rule that doctor's bills are never considered due until one year after service is rendered and are not to be paid until then."

The resolutions went on to say that they would adopt the same financial rules observed by other professions and they "would not render service to those who live at ease surrounded by comfort but who make it a practice to obtain medical service free by employing a new doctor each time, and fees shall be due when service is rendered."

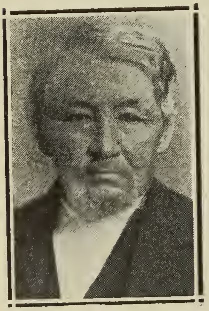
The fees adopted at that meeting were:

One visit per day in city	$1.50
Two visits	2.00
Night visits	2.00
Prescription at office	.50

Medicines to be charged extra.

One hopes the good doctors enforced the resolution and that they no longer had to give their services free to the folks "surrounded with ease and comfort", but were able to collect all their just dues.

The first county medical society was formed in the fall of 1853, according to Dr. W. J. Chenoweth, who attended the organization meeting, though not a resident of Decatur at the time. Dr. Joseph King was named president, and Dr. S. T. Trowbridge secretary. Dr. Chenoweth came here to reside in 1854, from Hillsboro, Ky., and from that time until 1859 he held office in the medical association. Meetings took place in Dr. Trowbridge's office.


DR. JOSEPH KING

At that time Dr. Trowbridge was considered the leading physician. He did all the work of a surgical nature. Dr. King also had a wide reputation.

Other physicians in Decatur at that time were

Drs. A. Keller, S. Y. Baldwin, Thomas Read, J. F. Roberts and A. Dillon. Dr. Roberts confined his work largely to his drug store, at the southeast corner of the square. There he was kept busy running his business and ministering to people, for whenever an accident happened anywhere near, the victim was rushed to Roberts drug store for first aid.

One day Dr. Roberts and Dr. Trowbridge attended the case of a prisoner in jail suffering from delirium tremens. The man had not only swallowed a stove lifter, but had tried to drive a pair of scissors into his head. The stove lifter didn't seem to have any bad effects, but the scissors did to the extent that he died from the wound. The broken scissors blade was taken from his skull.

The two doctors had been loath to believe the nurse when she had told them the man had swallowed the stove lifter. Following the patient's death, they examined the contents of his stomach. Snugly ensconced therein was the stove lifter!

Dr. Trowbridge was the first physician in Illinois to enlist when the Civil War began. He was surgeon of the 8th Illinois infantry, and to him was credited saving of the lives of General John A. Logan and General R. J. Oglesby, both of whom were wounded in battle.

Dr. Trowbridge enjoyed sports, horse racing, driving fast horses, games such as chess, checkers, and cards, and he spent money freely.[1] He was widely known for his success in surgical cases, and for some years had practically all that sort of practice in this section of Illinois. He was a man of vigor, and rode hundreds of miles every week to visit his patients. Dr. Trowbridge was the man who was responsible for the organization of the Medical society.

The Medical society had somewhat of a struggle to keep going the first few years of its existence. About 1857 it ceased activity, but was revived the next year by Dr. Trowbridge, and continued until the Civil war. When Dr. Trowbridge returned at the end of the war he found the society again dead. Once more he revived it. After its reorganization in 1865 it held meetings regularly for a time. By 1872 the society again had ceased to function.

In 1874 it was reorganized as the Decatur Medical society, with five members, Robert Tobey, president; Allison McBride, E. W. Moore, W. A. Barnes and W. H. Walters. By 1889 the society again was inactive and remained so for ten years. Then on Dec. 19, 1899, reorganization took place, with Dr. W. J. Chenoweth as president; J. N. Randall vice president, Will C. Wood secretary, and W. B. Hostetler and E. J. Brown censors. Since that time the society has had uninterrupted existence. In 1910 the society opened headquarters in the Citizens Building, where a medical library is maintained. Dr. Chenoweth presented 500 volumes to this library. In 1929 officers were Dr. O. O. Stanley, president; Dr. Lee Frech, vice president; Dr. W. D. Murfin, secretary-treasurer.

EARLY MEMBERS

Lack of space prevents giving a complete history of all the members of the society, but mention will be made of some of the earlier physicians.

Dr. William A. Barnes, who was a native of New Hampshire, came to Decatur in 1853 to practice medicine. In 1855 he purchased a drug store and ran the store in connection with his practice until 1859. He served as master-in-chancery during the Civil war period, and was also interested in the manufacturing business of Barnes and Lintner. Dr. Barnes was father of Dr. Will Barnes.

Dr. Samuel McBride began the practice of medicine in Pike county in 1849, and located in Decatur in 1855. He was a graduate of Starling Medical College in Columbus, Ohio.

Dr. Enoch W. Moore, who was a leading physician here for many years, came to Decatur in 1856. During the Civil war he was surgeon of the 105th Illinois Regiment for seven months. Dr. Moore was a partner of Dr. Ira Barnes for about thirty-five years.

Dr. Ira B. Curtis, native of Delaware, came to Decatur in 1840 when only 17 years of age. He read medicine with Dr. Joseph King, and formed partnership with him, but in 1849 went to Taylorville where he practiced for seven years. In 1856 he returned to Decatur and for a year was a partner of Dr. Chenoweth. He was a surgeon in the Civil war, and had charge of hospitals at Mound city. In 1862 he suffered a stroke of paralysis, losing the use of his legs. Though this practically ended his career as a physician, he served in other useful capacities, one of which was the office of county treasurer which he held for six years. He was for a long time a justice of the peace. Dr. Curtis was the father of O. E. and Frank Curtis.

Dr. Josiah Brown began practicing medicine here in 1862, coming here from Maroa where he had been for four years. He also studied law and was admitted to the bar, but gave practically his whole time to the practice of medicine. He was succeeded by his son, Dr. Everett J. Brown.

Dr. Ira N. Barnes located in Decatur in 1862 and for many years was one of Decatur's best known physicians. He had spent a year in Decatur in the drug business with his brother, W. A. Barnes, in

1855-56. Most of the years of Dr. Barnes' medical practice in Decatur were in partnership with Dr. E. W. Moore. Dr. Lynn Barnes is a son of Dr. Ira N. Barnes.

Dr. J. Stebbins King was another of Decatur's leading surgeons. He served during the Civil war in the capacity of surgeon, and in 1870 located in Decatur, where he practiced his profession for many years.

The Chenoweth family has furnished Decatur with three generations of physicians. Dr. W. J. Chenoweth, mentioned before, was the first. His son, Dr. Cass Chenoweth, began practicing medicine here in 1869 after graduating from Rush Medical school. His son, Dr. Will Chenoweth, took up the same profession. Dr. W. J. Chenoweth and his friend, J. E. Bering, were both instantly killed in August, 1915, when the car in which they were riding was struck by an I. T. S. car.

Decatur's first woman doctor was Dr. Miranda M. Sargent, known particularly for her temperance activities. Sargent chapel on South Broadway, the predecessor of the Cleveland Avenue Methodist church was named for her.

Mention should be made also of the late Dr. Ellen F. Grimes, whose long years of quiet, efficient, unassuming service in Decatur, particularly among the women, endeared her to everyone who knew her, and were an inspiration to others. Dr. Grimes came to Decatur about 1879 and practiced her profession here until 1923. She died in New York City in 1925.

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[1] Dr. Silas T. Trowbridge made a jump in 1852 which was a record for that day. He jumped at one leap 22 feet and 8 inches. A record of the feat was made on the Macon county books of record by the county recorder, Samuel Rea.

[2] Once the medics started a museum and had some interesting pathological specimens. These specimens, however, were not well preserved and in the warm weather became so offensive that people complained about them. So the medics decided to do away with them. A colored man was engaged to take them out in a sack and quietly bury them in the potter's field. He left with the sack, but before he could get to the burying he was seen by several friends who were curious to know what was in the sack. The negro refused to tell, and got rid of the sack by throwing it in the river below the dam. The friends couldn't rest until they knew the contents of that sack, so they secured poles and fished it out. Suspicions of foul murder arose when they found the bones, and the coroner was summoned. However, Coroner Givler didn't find it necessary to hold an inquest.

CHAPTER XXXVIII

GOLD SEEKERS

GOLD in California!! To be had for the digging!

The news swept like wild fire over the country back in the days of 1848 and 1849. Excitement ran high. Marvelous tales were coming of the rich dirt with its generous yield of the precious dust. Nuggets growing in size each time the tale was repeated—to be picked up anywhere! From all parts of the country, men, fired by the spirit of daring and adventure, were turning their faces and footsteps toward the west. The gold rush was on!

Desire to join the trail of the Forty-Niners swept over the young men of Macon county. Rich in ambition to see something of the world, as well as to claim a fortune, they prepared to go. They wanted their share of the big diggings.

CARAVAN LEAVES

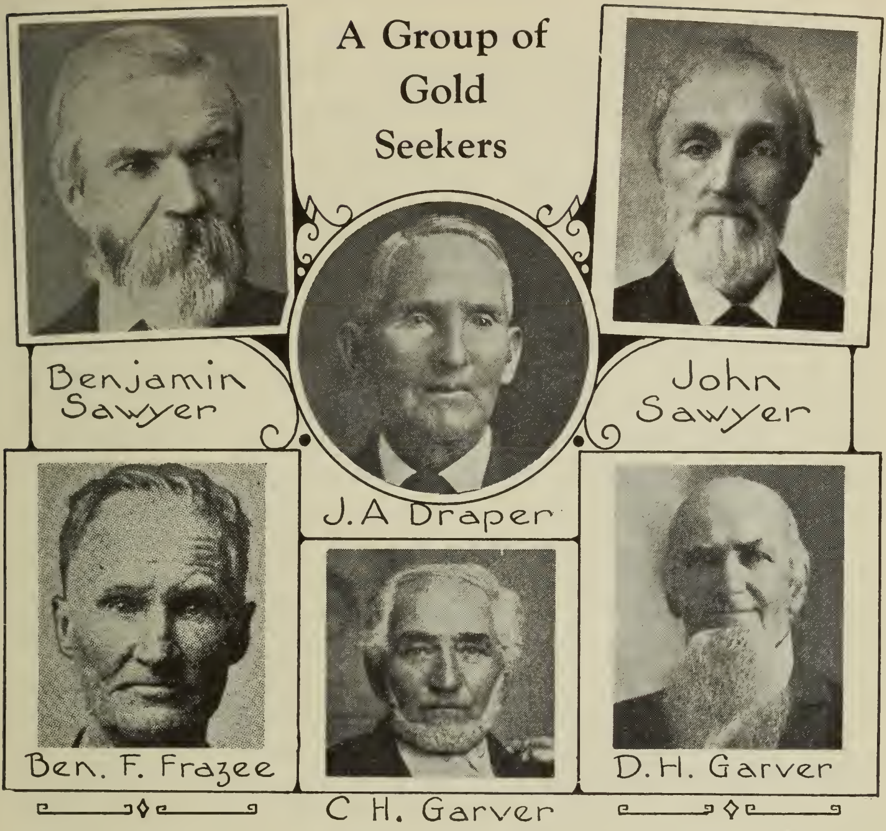
At daybreak on the morning of March 25, 1850, a caravan of men and loaded wagons pulled out from the Old Square. Laughter and tears were mingled, as the caravan took its departure. Men were leaving their wives and families, their sweethearts, their friends. They did not know all that was before them. Yet any feeling of sadness was overcome with the thoughts of the fortune they would bring back. With cheers and farewells, cracking of whips over the mule teams, waving of arms in a last good-bye, they were off!

Fifteen or twenty wagons and a goodly number of men were in the party which left that morning. Ammunition, guns, rifles, provisions, camping outfits, and other needed equipment for the journey filled the wagons, all of which were drawn by mules.

By the end of the first day they had reached Illiopolis. The second night they camped at Springfield. Progress was slow on account of the mud. It took three weeks to reach Quincy. There they were ferried across the Mississippi.

At St. Joseph, Mo., they joined a larger caravan headed for the west. They did not leave at once, however. It was necessary to wait a few weeks until the grass along the trail grew sufficiently to supply the mules and cattle with feed. It was not until May 10 that the caravan made its start westward. By that time the party had grown to about sixty.[1]

Isaac Miller had gone from Decatur to Oskaloosa, Ia., to join his four sons, who were to go on the trip, but the sons persuaded



A Group of Gold Seekers

Miller not to go, as they thought the journey would be too hard for the older man. Miller had been accompanied to Iowa by his stepson, Ben Frazee. The Miller boys and Frazee went on to St. Joseph and joined the caravan, while the elder Miller returned home.

Many tales have been told of the journey to the west, for the gold seekers had many interesting experiences and encountered many hardships.

After leaving St. Joseph, the party headed for Fort Kearney, Neb. On their way they often met bands of Indians, but were not molested. From Kearney on to Fort Laramie, Wyo., they made better progress as the ground was dry. In another ten days they reached Fort Hall. Farther and farther they continued their way until finally the desert was reached.

Up to this time the Decatur wagons had kept pretty well together but now real troubles began and they became separated. The mules began to get sick. Men and animals were nearly crazed with thirst before they reached water. The men kept small bullets in their mouths to keep them damp and cool, and they wrapped lead around the bits of the mules for the same purpose. Silas Packard and Samuel Powers had to part company with the rest when Mr. Powers's fine team of mules became sick shortly after the desert was reached.. Soon all the wagons were scattered and not more than two were together at any time for the rest of the journey. Sometimes one wagon traveled alone. Finally the wagons were abandoned and supplies were packed on the backs of the mules. Ben and John Sawyer and D. H. Garver were on one of the two wagons which were the first to cross the Sierra Nevada mountains into California. Anderson Draper, who had been with Packard, rode on ahead and reached the Carson river. After he and his mule had quenched their thirst, Draper filled a vessel with water and went back five miles to find Packard. "An angel from heaven would not have been more welcome than Draper with that water," Packard said afterwards. They were among the first to cross the mountains and start mining.

In one stretch of desert beyond Carson the only water was from a rock from which boiling water gushed forth at intervals. The weary travelers used the hot water to make tea, or filled their kegs and let the water cool.

One group of the Macon county men reached Nevada City, Cal., Oct. 2, 1850. They had been more than six months on the way.

The success of the men who hunted for gold was in varying degrees. Some found but little, others a good deal. However, they all felt the trip was worth while for the experience, if not for the gold. Some stayed a year or two, others longer. Some never came back. Dr. Edmund Packard of Decatur, was one who died in the west.

It was no easy life in those days in California, especially in the winter time. Often the trails were blocked with snow and provisions became scarce. Donerville, one of the richest mining camps on the North Yuba, was blocked in the winter of 1850-51. Men had to go down the river to Foster's Bar, where they had to pay 50 cents a pound for floor, and had to carry it on their backs up to their camp. There they sold it at $1 a pound.

Stories of big finds were always abroad. One Decatur man said the largest nugget he picked up was worth $16.25. The largest one he saw was worth $1,000. Incidentally it came from Poor Man's Creek. It was necessary to keep an eye on one's gold and other belongings for robberies were frequent. Rough characters crowded the mining camps and there was a great deal of fighting and drinking and gambling. In a letter written by John Sawyer, he said:

"Benjamin left for ——— some two months ago. John Hanks had three mules stolen or lost off the ranch. I had two went the same way. Hanks had $200 stolen, Morris about $100—their trunk broken open in daylight. My trunk was cut open at the same time, but the creature was not there, as I had taken my money, watch and pistols out and had them with me, by which I saved them.

"There have been some ten or twelve tents robbed this winter. Within two miles around there is a band of robbers connected from the north to the south. They steal mules and cattle and run them from one to the other. The mines are full of blacklegs. More gambling done than a little."

Mr. Sawyer was sick with the fever for a long time, and was not expected to live. His sickness cost him, he said, upwards of $400.

Even murder attracted little attention during the days of the gold rush as illustrated by one story. At a Christmas ball at the Grass Valley hotel in the winter of 1850 after an entire night of dancing Mr. Ross was fired upon by two different men, and as he ran across the street, a third took a shot at him. Ross fell dead. Each of the three claimed to be the one who fired the fatal shot. The constable took the three contenders for the honor (?) of killing the man before the justice of the peace at Rough and Ready, a rich mining camp nearby, and told the justice how matters stood. Not having any witness against any of them all three were discharged and away they went.

Not all the men who went to California for gold left in the caravan of 1850. Richard Oglesby, Henry Prather and a half dozen others made the trip in 1849. A caravan, headed by E. O. Smith, went in 1852. Israel Horner, a farm hand of Chauncey Powers, was in this party. At Death Valley he was reported missing. A searching party found him delirious, scooping out the sand in search of water.

Among the Macon county men who at one time or another made the long trek to California in search of gold were:

Samuel Powers.
Silas Packard.
Hosea Armstrong.
Richard J. Oglesby.
D. H. Garver.
Ben Sawyer.
John Sawyer.
Anderson Draper.
John Hanks.
George Hiser.
Jonathan Florey.
C. H. Garver.
Felix Spangler.
Ben Frazee.
Edmund Packard.
William T. Moffett.
James Taylor.
Robert Boyd.
Samuel Hudson.
James K. Giles.
Mason Packard.
William Stewart.
Henry Prather.
William Hanks.
John Gepford.
Judd Mettlin.
James Mettlin.
Louis Hanks.
Cal Smith.

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[1] Two of the men in the caravan had excellent reputations as wrestlers. They were Anderson Draper and C. H. Garver. They were about evenly matched as to size and weight. Other men in the crowd kept urging the two wrestlers to put on a match to see which was the better man. Neither Draper nor Garver had any desire to fight. When the caravan stopped at the Missouri river, however, the crowd declared that it would not move a step farther until the wrestling match was pulled off. So Draper and Garver met, on the grassy banks of the stream. For a time it was an even battle, but finally Draper threw his opponent. The crowd was satisfied, and the caravan proceeded.

CHAPTER XXXIX

THE RAILROADS COME

OH, LOOK, there it comes!"

Excited children danced up and down. Faces of little folks and big folks were turned in eager anticipation toward the west. Over the wrinkled countenances of the old spread looks of amazement. The puffing of a locomotive had been heard. With a rumble and a roar an engine pulled in.

Decatur was out to welcome its first railroad train. With that first train came the beginning of the era of Decatur's prosperity, and the county's development. Nothing now could stand in the way. Decatur and Macon county had arrived!

That was a momentous day in April, 1854, when the Great Western Railroad company inaugurated train service into Decatur. It was something that for years had been longed for and worked for.[1] It was the culmination of hopes started back in the '30s.

The coming of the railroads brought more to Macon county than the wildest dreams ever fancied. Agricultural development was now assured. Industries started could find markets for their products. Material advancement could be made in any direction. The railroads brought more people. More people meant more business. The United States census figures tell the history of the county's increase in population. In 1850 there were only 3,998 people in the entire country. By 1870 that figure had risen to 26,481. In Decatur alone there were probably 1500 people before 1854. In 1860 there were 3,839. By 1870 the population was 7,161.

That first locomotive which made the trip into Decatur was called "The Frontier". It was well named, for the county might have been classed as frontier before that time.

AN EARLY WABASH LOCOMOTIVE

When Decatur turned out enmasse that April day to greet its first train, it really had to go to the country.[2] Decatur then did not extend as far north as the Wabash track. It didn't take the city long to expand that far, however, after the railroads came. Before the road was built, three surveys were made for the right of way. One came in through the old fair grounds and east over what is now Eldorado street. Another was almost the same as the one selected.

Sullivan Burgess, who afterwards was Decatur's city engineer at various times, was a busy man in the days of building railroads. He located the line from Springfield to Decatur, and from Decatur to Tolono, also, later on, the road from Decatur to East St. Louis, and was in charge of the construction work of the latter line from Decatur to Taylorville. He located railroads in various other sections of the country, also. Afterwards he was a partner in business with Charles A. Tuttle, who had been division engineer with the Illinois Central when its line was under construction.

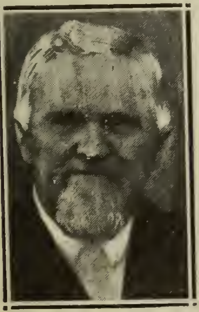
The railroad track was finished between Springfield and Wyckles quite a while before it came on in to Decatur. The delay was caused by the long fill at Stevens creek. Work on the fill had to be done by man power, as there were no steam shovels. The men used picks to loosen the ground in cuts further west. Then the dirt was shoveled by hand into cars, and wheeled in to where the fill was being made.

It took large gangs of men and much time to make this fill. It was difficult to secure labor, and men employed were rather a rough class. Many were the tales told of troubles in the labor camps.

Two gangs were at work most of the time, one composed of Irish and the other of Germans, fresh from the old country. Disputes were inevitable.[3]

THE WABASH

The railroad company known as the Great Western, which brought Decatur its first road, later became a part of the Toledo, Wabash and Western, afterwards called the Wabash and Western, and reorganized in 1877 as the Wabash railway company. In 1879 it was consolidated with the St. Louis, Kansas City and Northern Railway company and became known as the Wabash, St. Louis and Pacific. In 1889 it was reorganized as the Wabash Railroad company. In 1915 the road was sold under foreclosure, and the reorganized company was incorporated as the Wabash Railway company. Two important additions which came into control of the road were the Missouri, Kansas and Texas line from Moberly to Hannibal, Mo., and the Ann Arbor Railroad company lines.


JOHN DINNEEN

The Decatur and East St. Louis railroad was chartered in 1867, but the line from Decatur to St. Louis was built in 1869 under the management of the Toledo, Wabash and Western. The first Wabash roundhouse in Decatur was built in 1869. It was an eight-stall house.

In the earliest days of the road oxen were used for switching cars. The first yardmaster in Decatur was John Dinneen, who began work in the early '60s, and remained with the Wabash until 1875. At first Dinneen drove the oxen and switched the cars for both the Wabash and Illinois Central. The first switch engine was not brought in until after the line to St. Louis had been constructed.

In 1884 the Wabash shops were moved from Peoria to Decatur. From that time on, Wabash interests in Decatur increased in size and importance. Millions of dollars have been spent on grounds, buildings, bridges and equipment. Some of the big projects have been the construction of the locomotive shops in 1913-14, and additions made later, miles of trackage in the yards, reclamation plant, concrete bridge east of Decatur, bridge over Sangamon on line to St. Louis, and innumerable buildings. Inside of Decatur alone the Wabash has thirty-seven miles of tracks. One year, in 1926, the Wabash spent more than $7,500,000 in Decatur.

Decatur was the headquarters of the old Middle division, when the system had three divisions, eastern, middle and western. After the system was re-divided and more divisions were created, it remained headquarters for the Decatur division. It not only is the location of the division offices, but has some of the general offices, namely, the mechanical, telegraph and signal departments.

Thirty-three hundred persons in Decatur are employed by the Wabash, and the annual payroll is estimated at $5,000,000. Scores of trains pass through the city each day.

Today the Wabash system covers nearly 3,000 miles, serving eight states of the United States and a province of Canada. According to its report for 1929, the earnings for that year were $76,632,974.

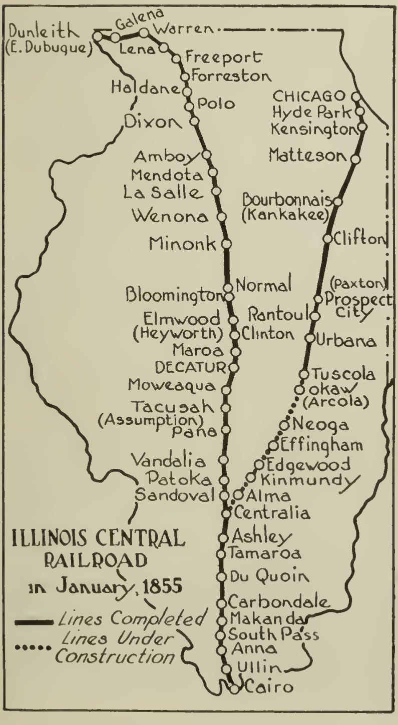
WABASH STATION

Rightly Decatur is called the "Hub" of the Wabash.

ILLINOIS CENTRAL

The Illinois Central was the second railroad to inaugurate service into Decatur, though its tracks had been laid in the city before those of the Great Western. Its line from Clinton to Decatur, on which the first service was given, was completed Oct. 18, 1854.

In 1850 Congress passed what is known as the Illinois land-grant act, sponsored by Judge Sidney A. Breeze, and later, in a modified form, by Senator Stephen A. Douglas. This act gave to the state of Illinois 2,595,000 acres of land to aid in the construction of a railroad 705½ miles long, from Cairo to East Dubuque, with branch line from Centralia to Chicago. In February, 1851, the Illinois Central railroad was incorporated, and the legislature conveyed this land to the railroad company. The charter of the road provided that 7 per cent of the gross earnings of the company should be paid into the state treasury. The land given to the railroad consisted of alternate sections on either side of the proposed route. The proceeds from the sale of these lands were to help defray cost of construction of the road.[4]



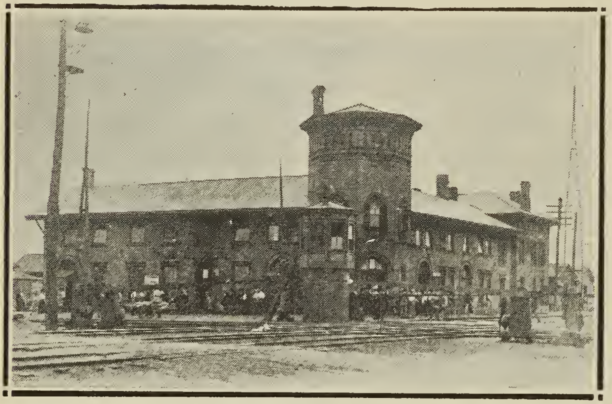
FIRST ILLINOIS CENTRAL MAP

The route was surveyed in 1851 and by spring the following year construction work was in progress.[5] The first section of the line completed was between LaSalle and Bloomington. Through service between Chicago and Cairo was established Jan. 8, 1855.

When surveys were first made through Macon county the line was six miles west of Decatur. That would never do, thought the enterprising citizens of the town. Immediately a movement was started to have the route changed. Through the efforts of E. O. Smith, the change was made and the road routed through Decatur.[6]

After the road was finished, Decatur people could reach Chicago by using the Central to Mendota, and connecting there with the Chicago and Aurora railroad, now the Burlington.

At the intersection of the Illinois Central and Wabash lines a station was erected in 1855 by the Illinois Central. Five acres of land were donated to the Illinois Central as a site for the station by B. H. Cassell. The deed was given July 4, 1853, and specified that the land was to be used only for a depot site. Mr. Cassell sold other land in the vicinity to Prather, Martin and Gatling, who laid out the addition of that name west of the tracks. East of the tracks is the Gatling addition. Mr. Gatling, by the way, was the man who invented the Gatling gun.


OLD UNION DEPOT

The depot, which stood across the tracks east of the present station, was used as a Union depot from 1855 to 1901, when the present day separate stations were put into use. It was a substantial brick building two stories high, and with an eight-sided tower. Included in the building was a hotel. Its name was The Central House. The hotel office was on the first floor, while on the second floor were twenty sleeping rooms. It was a convenience for the traveling public and the hotel was well patronized. It was opened in the summer of 1855. Among the landlords at that hotel were John Slaughter, O. McKenzie, Newell A. White, Colonel A. C. Waterhouse and Robert R. Taggart. The latter was proprietor at the time the building was dismantled. The old Central hotel had some busy days during the years of the Civil war, when soldiers were being sent to the army and again on their return.

ILLINOIS CENTRAL STATION

In the tower of the depot was a smoking room for men. On the first floor of the Illinois Central wing of the depot, were the hotel dining room, telegraph office and baggage rooms. On the Great Western side were men's and women's waiting rooms. Ticket offices were between the two sections of the building. The Great Western baggage room and express office were to the east of the depot.

OTHER RAILROADS

Other railroads came to Decatur in the next twenty years. The line between Decatur and Pekin, built by the Pekin, Lincoln and Decatur railroad company, was opened in November, 1871. It was leased by the Toledo, Wabash and Western for a time. After consolidation with the Decatur, Sullivan and Mattoon company, it became the Peoria, Decatur and Evansville, and still later, in 1900, it went into the hands of the Illinois Central. The line between Hervey City and Mattoon had been built by the Decatur, Sullivan and Mattoon railroad company and opened for operation in 1872, the track of the Illinois Midland being used between Decatur and Hervey City.

The track between Decatur and Champaign was built in 1873 by the Decatur, Monticello and Champaign Railroad company, later becoming the Indianapolis, Bloomington and Western. It afterward became part of the Wabash system, and then was leased to the Illinois Central.

The Illinois Midland was a consolidation of the Peoria, Atlanta and Decatur railroad and the Paris and Decatur railroad. The line was built in 1872. It extended from Peoria to Terre Haute. The Illinois Midland station, erected about 1872 at Broadway and East Main, housed the general offices of the company. When this road went into receivership, it was put in charge of D. H. Conklin, who afterwards became mayor of Decatur. Mr. Conklin was interested in other railroads. He had the distinction, by the way, of being the first telegrapher engaged by a railroad company. That was back in 1849.

ILLINOIS MIDLAND STATION

The Illinois Midland was reorganized as the Terre Haute and Peoria, later became the Vandalia line, and eventually part of the Pennsylvania system. The Vandalia used the old station as a freight house until the erection of a new freight house and office building in the 800 block

North Broadway. Since then the old building has been used mostly by coal dealers.

The Indianapolis, Decatur and Springfield was chartered in 1850 as the Indiana and Illinois Central, but the line was not built until 1872, and then only as far as Montezuma, Ind. Later it was extended to Indianapolis. It passed through several hands, eventually becoming a part of the C. H. and D., afterwards the C. I. and W., and finally the B. and O. The line between Decatur and Springfield was not built until 1902.

Decatur had the beginnings of another line, but it disappeared suddenly. The Decatur and State Line company, whose purpose was to build a road connecting Decatur and Chicago, was incorporated in 1869. About $600,000 was raised to build the road, $85,000 being voted by Macon county. Work started near Kankakee. In April, 1871, ground was broken on the Samuel Powers place northeast of town, for the first work to be done in this county on the road. One day work ceased. All efforts to learn what had happened failed. It was generally believed that some other railroad had bought off the promoters of this line.

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[1] The news soon spread when the Great Western surveyors reached Decatur on Christmas day, in 1852. The men stopped at the Harrell house. It was unusual to have a group of surveyors for a railroad here, and due honor must be done the occasion. A reception was arranged for the evening. It was held in the old court house on the old square, and James Shoaff, newspaper editor, was said to have been the spirit of the occasion. Matt Johnson, a peculiar character, furnished the music with his fiddle. At the side of his chair sat the little brown jug, from which he had to take a bracer at the close of each cotillion. Johnson just couldn't get a tune right if he didn't have the little brown jug to brace him up!

[2] Although people in general wanted to see the railroad come to the county there were some who made objections, thinking it would be the ruination of the country. The objections sound very foolish today. Some complained that the whistling of engines and the noise of cars would drive away all the game. Others said the ranges would be destroyed and poor people would have to keep their hogs and cattle enclosed. It would be impossible to cultivate land, because the trains would frighten the horses. Men who made their living by hauling naturally felt their business would be ruined. Jesse Lockhart of Niantic said he had just left a country that was all fenced in (Kentucky), and he had come here to find plenty of room. The railroad would ruin the country, he said. Lockhart was so provoked at the idea that he threatened to pull up the stakes if surveyors set stakes on his land. He did do that once, but the surveyors expostulated with him, and finally he was convinced that the roads would do no harm. So well was he persuaded, that he even helped put the stakes back. Ever afterwards he was a friend of the road.

[3] One Saturday pay day, according to story told by R. R. Montgomery, the Irish workmen, after going to town and getting filled up with bad whisky, started a raid on the Germans. Armed with shovels, picks and clubs they entered upon a battle royal. It was reported (erroneously, however) in town early Sunday morning that several had been killed and others badly wounded. The sheriff called a mass meeting of citizens and asked for volunteers to help seize the trouble makers. A company of thirty men was formed. Armed with old flintlock muskets, which had seen service in the Mexican and Black Hawk wars, they made their way, some horseback and others afoot, to the scene of the riot. They brought in quite a number of the disturbers.

[4] A pamphlet issued by the Illinois Central in 1857 to advertise its land for sale contained among other things figures on the cost of "opening a farm". It was stated that a one-story frame house, 14 by 26 feet, plainly and comfortably finished, divided into two rooms, plastered and painted, could be had for $225 to $250. For a larger house, one and one-half stories, 16 by 28

feet, three rooms above and two below, with pantry, the cost would be $400 to $425. Contractors agreed to furnish such houses in four to six weeks. Letters telling of the success of people who had located on such farms were printed. Isaac Funk of near Bloomington was mentioned as having acquired 27,000 acres, and his sales of cattle the previous year had been $65,000. Jesse Funk, who formerly made rails for his neighbors at 25 cents a hundred, had purchased land and raised cattle and hogs. His sale of stock the previous year amounted to $44,000.

[5] Colonel Roswell B. Mason, chief engineer of construction of the Illinois Central when it was started in 1851, often told of the difficulties encountered in the work. It was necessary to get labor from big cities as far away as New York and Montreal. So many railroads were being built at that time that rival agents would entice men away from one road to another. Another handicap was the prevalence of cholera and milk sickness. Epidemics broke out in the summers of 1853 and 1854 and men died by the scores. Many laborers, at work one day, were dead the next. In Peru, Ill., 130 men died within ten days. Those not stricken with illness scattered quickly. Whisky was another factor contributing to the difficulties. Drunkenness was common, and often riots occurred. One such occasion at LaSalle resulted in the murder of a contractor, and it was necessary to call out state troops to restore quiet. Trouble also was caused by cattle getting on the railroad track. Once a construction train was thrown from the track by running over a cow, and three men were killed and one other seriously injured.

[6] The first stake for the Illinois Central survey in Decatur was driven June 6, 1851, near where the passenger station now stands. Headquarters for the workmen were established at the Macon house. Several lines were run south. The first move of the party was to Willow Creek (Elwin), and the next to Flat branch (near Moweaqua). From there south the men had to work through real wilderness. Rattlesnakes, deer, wolves abounded. To add to their discomforts it rained every day.

CHAPTER XL

MUSIC ORGANIZATIONS

DECATUR has never lacked in musical talent, and it has been the home of several musical organizations which have brought fame to the city.

The first one organized, and which in later years put Decatur "on the map" musically, was The Goodman band, thought by some to be the oldest band in the United States, and one with a record which few, if any, bands can equal. During the years of its existence this band has furnished musicians in four wars, the Civil War, Spanish-American war, Mexican border war, and the World war.

Nine men were charter members of the organization when it met on the night of Sept. 19, 1857, for its first meeting. They were D. S. Shellabarger, James Haworth, J. G. Starr, Jake Kauffman, George Patterson, John Roswell, W. W. Lapham, Henry Dunham and Will L. Smith. One of these, Henry Dunham, who was the first snare drummer in the band, is still living at this writing (1930).

The first director was Mr. Kingfield from outside Decatur, but later Will L. Smith, who was a leader in the movement to organize the band, directed the organization for a number of years, until he started out on the road with his Swiss Bell Ringers.[1] The band had several different names during its early years. It was first known as the Decatur Brass band, was also called the Decatur Silver band, and the Decatur Cornet band. It became known as The Goodman band when Professor A. Goodman became its leader in 1873, and has retained that name ever since.

In 1862 the band bought new instruments from the proceeds of a concert given at the town hall.

During the period of the Civil war the band languished to some extent, a number of the members serving in the army, but the organization was kept up, and in 1867 it was reorganized with the following members:

Chris Kramer.
W. N. Zimmerman.
Jack Ricketts.
Silas Packard.
W. L. Smith.
W. H. Starr
Charles Hopping.
Joe Berry.
Joe Ricketts.
John E. King.
George Patterson.
Berry Kaylor.
Will Dennis.
D. S. Shellabarger.
Joe Ehrhart.
Richard Harkness.

D. S. Shellabarger and Silas Packard dropped out shortly afterwards, and Ed Seifert came in. From time to time there were other changes in membership, but usually the number was kept up to fourteen.[2]

From 1862 to 1865 George Howe was director of the band, and after him came Joe Ricketts. In 1871-72 Professor C. A. Foster was director. Then in 1873 came Professor A. Goodman, and under his leadership began a brilliant era for the band. The organization took on new life and became known far and wide over the country.

Professor Goodman was director until 1882. Other directors following him were Charles Maxwell, F. W. Haines and C. A. Foster. In 1887 Professor Robert Walter became director, a position he filled for about forty years. In 1928 Roy Jones was named director.

One of the early members of the band, F. W. Haines, played in the band for nearly eighteen years. For some time he served as business manager.

On May 4, 1901, the band was mustered into the Fourth Infantry, I. N. G., and became the regimental band.

The band has been a popular organization. It has been the attraction at local events, at county, state and national gatherings.

THE GOODMAN BAND IN 1867

Left to right—Standing: Joe Berry, Charlie Ricketts, Joe Ehrhart, Chris Kramer, W. H. Starr, John E. King, Ed Seifert.

Seated: W. N. Zimmerman, Will Smith, Joe Ricketts, George Patterson, "Bill" Dennis, Charles Hopping, Berry Kaylor.

OTHER ORGANIZATIONS

Will L. Smith had an active part in the musical development of the city. He organized the Decatur Ladies' band in the fall of 1866. Its members were as follows: Mrs. Will L. Smith, Miss Rosaline Kinkead (Mrs. H. B. Ives), Mrs. S. T. Trowbridge, Miss Ada Trowbridge, Miss Louisa Bear, and Miss Ella Bloom (Mrs. Richard Oglesby).[3] Two men also were in the band, Charley Trowbridge playing the bass drum and cymbals and Mr. Smith playing the cornet.

This was something new not only in Decatur but in the United States—a band composed of women. It simply wasn't being done in those days. Such a novel attraction soon became popular and invitations began to pour in.

The lady musicians first had brass instruments, but they wanted something better, and soon they were provided with silver horns. The band then became known as the Ladies' Silver band. The members earned part of the $445 needed to purchase the instruments by playing at the state fair.

This band was later merged with the Smith's Swiss Bell Ringers, the organization directed by Mr. Smith for so many years. This group of musicians was heard in every section of the country. It was in existence until 1900.

Mr. Smith and Miss Lizzie Kinkead Coleman were married Feb. 11, 1862, by the bride's foster father, Rev. John W. Coleman. They bought the old James Renshaw log house, moved it to Morgan and Division streets, and built a house from the lumber. There were no other houses then in the neighborhood.

In the late '50s the Decatur Choral society was active. D. L. Bunn was largely instrumental in organizing it. There were about twenty members, and for a time Dr. W. A. Barnes was leader.

Many a soldier's child went hungry during the dark days of the Civil war when father was away at the front. It would seem that such a statement would have little to do with music, yet it was that very thing which brought about the organization of Decatur's most talented people of that day, the Decatur Musical Union.

Formed to meet a war period need, it did not end its career with the war, but flourished for twenty years, and during that time was the principal source of revenue for the charity work done in the city.

Some decorating was being done for a Thanksgiving festival in 1861, when the women, chatting away at their work, launched on to the subject of some of the destitute people, sympathizing as always with the children particularly.

"Let's give a Christmas dinner for them," said one.

It would be a fine thing, they all agreed, but—where would the money come from? Money wasn't plentiful then.

"I'll see George," said Amanda Montgomery.

Well, George was seen and he was equal to the occasion. A concert was suggested to raise money. Lowber Burrows, D. L. Bunn and others were drafted.

All were willing to assist. As a result a meeting of singers was called, and at that meeting, in December, 1861, was organized the Decatur Musical Union.

"George," who was George F. Wessels, became the musical director of the union. He was its inspiration, its leader, and not until after he left Decatur did the Union cease to exist.

Officers elected at the organization meeting were:

President—Lowber Burrows.

Vice President—Dr. William A. Barnes.

Secretary—J. R. Mosser.

Treasurer—W. T. Edmundson.

Musical director—George F. Wessels.

Pianist—Miss Mattie Cass.

Two concerts were given in about ten days after organization. One was "for the benefit of the poor" and the other for the rent of a hall and piano and the purchase of music for the Union.

The object of the society was to "bring together the musical talent of Decatur for educational and charitable purposes."

The members were able to sing and to act, and they used their talents generously. About six entertainments usually were put on during a year. A variety of programs was furnished. Oratorios, cantatas, tableaux, plays, quartets were among the performances offered. Brilliant stage effects and rich costuming featured the plays. At one of the state fairs held in Decatur the Union gave four performances to crowded houses, making enough money to pay expenses, give 10 per cent to the Relief society, and to buy a Chickering piano, and still the treasury wasn't exhausted.

Among the singers in the Union were J. R. Mosser, baritone, Joseph Ehrhart, George Patterson and M. A. Myer, basses, L. L. Ferris, D. L. Bunn and A. P. Griswold, tenors, Mary Elizabeth Bunn, Sallie Moore and Alida Suits, sopranos.

Mrs. Wessels, who had been Amanda Montgomery, was one of the leading contraltos. Lowber Burrows was stage director and Dr. William A. Barnes his assistant. Annie Livingston and Star Mansfield were particularly good at costuming, and that phase of the work usually fell to their lot.

The Union had an orchestra composed of Molly Masterson, pianist; Henry Ebert, first violin; Dr. E. S. Jones, flute; Mr. Jordan, harp; Ben Davis, 'cello, and Albert Condell, double bass viol.

Some years after the Musical Union ceased to exist, a new musical club was organized, known as the Decatur Musical club. It was started about 1885. Members were Frank and Edward Powers, C. W. Montgomery, Miss Hattie E. Hitchcock, Stella B. Hadden, Professor Olaf Bull, J. B. Burrows, Maude Burrows, Will and James Roberts, Belle Ewing, Rose E. Judson, Clara Irwin, A. B. Alexander, Frank Shull, Anna Willis Berry. During the years of this club's activities, much outside musical talent was brought to Decatur. Finally the club ceased activity.

Later, in 1895, another club, called the Musical Culture club, afterwards the Decatur Musical club, was organized and flourished for some time. After it went out of existence Decatur had no music club until 1924 when the present day Decatur Music club was organized.

For ten years or more the Handel society, directed by S. M. Lutz, appeared in public concerts. Its first big achievement was a concert in Bloomington in 1897.

An outstanding music organization in more recent years was the Decatur Oratorio choir, directed by Donald M. Swarthout, which had its largest membership and greatest success from 1919 to 1923, and which appeared annually in presentation of some well known oratorio.

Establishment of music schools, organization of various bands, orchestras, choirs, teaching of music in the public schools, bringing of outside artists for concerts here, all have had their part in recent years in furthering music interests in Decatur.

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[1] Mrs. Smith has told the following story: When the band gave its first public concert in Powers hall, Joe Starr was on the program for a cornet solo. It happened that he had had all his teeth removed that day, and when he undertook to play his solo he failed to make the grade. The band leader couldn't stand for the results which Starr was producing from his cornet and he took the instrument away from him and played the solo himself. Starr had nothing to do but stand there and look on in amazement.

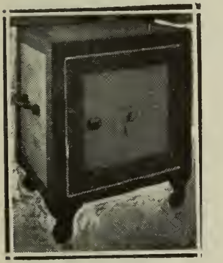
[2] One time in 1869, shortly after being reorganized, the band was called upon to play at the Henry Prather funeral. It had no music ready and the death march was learned during the few hours preceding the funeral time.

[3] This Richard Oglesby was a cousin of Governor Richard J. Oglesby.

CHAPTER XLI

DECATUR BANKS

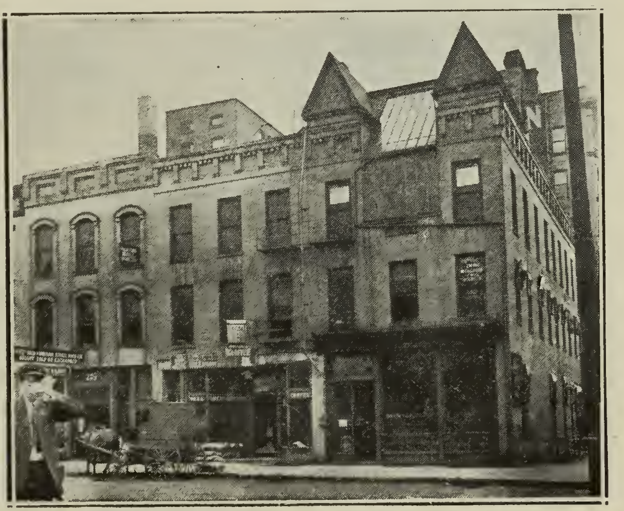
A small private safe, installed in an unpretentious East Main street store in the year 1852, was the beginning of the first permanent banking business in Decatur.



PEDDECORD'S SAFE

For the first twenty-three years of the history of the city, Decatur managed to get along without a bank, and probably, especially in the first few years, the lack of such an institution was scarcely felt. But eventually there came a time when people began accumulating some money, and began to weigh the question as to where to place it for safe keeping.

The fact that they began bringing their money to J. J. Peddecord to hold for them was a tribute to the man. Evidently he was the one in whom they had the most confidence. He had started in business in Decatur as a storekeeper but he became a banker just as a matter of accommodation to his friends. The new bank, filling a need in the city, was so successful that finally in 1855, Mr. Peddecord gave up the store to devote his entire time to banking.

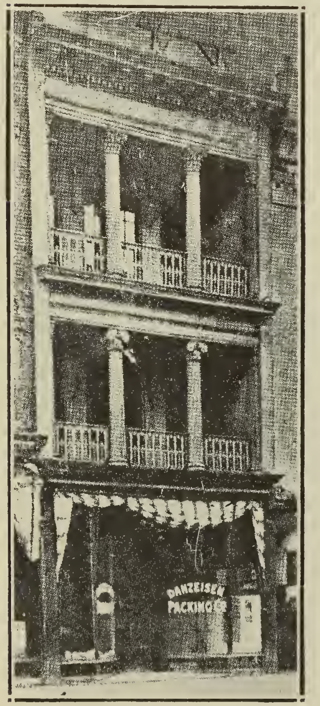


PEDDECORD & BURROWS BANK

When Mr. Peddecord first began keeping money for his customers, he placed it in an envelope or other wrapping and laid it in a drawer with the owner's name on it. When it began accumulating, he bought a safe. One day Mr. Peddecord decided to count the money which had been entrusted to him and he was astonished to find he had $20,000. A checking system was established then, and Mr. Peddecord and his partner, L. L. Burrows, became the banking firm of Peddecord and Burrows, which continued in business for sixty years.

The first place of business of Peddecord & Burrows, as bankers exclusively, was in a second story room on Water street. In 1858 they moved to a ground floor room on South Park street. In 1878 they began occupying the room at the corner of South Park and Water streets, where they remained for years. On that corner the business still exists, though under different name and in a different building, the bank having been merged with the National Bank of Decatur which erected a new building on the site.

Few changes were made in the firm during its long stay in the Decatur business world. In 1857 William Martin became a member, and the name became Peddecord, Burrows and Martin. Mr. Martin retired in 1859, and the firm again was Peddecord and Burrows. In 1878 William Boyd entered the company and the firm became Peddecord, Burrows and Company. Mr. Boyd passed away in 1889. No change was made, however, in the name until after the death of Mr. Peddecord in 1899. From that time on the bank was known as the L. Burrows & Co. bank. Mr. Burrows died in 1910 and two years later the bank was merged with the National Bank of Decatur.



FIRST HOME OF MILLIKIN BANK

MILLIKIN BANK

James Millkin, founder of the Millikin bank, began business in Decatur as a banker in 1860. He had the courage to make the start at rather a discouraging time and in a rather discouraging place, and though in the first twenty years the bank went through trying times it gradually grew until it has become one of the strongest institutions of the kind in the state.

It was just a week after the failure of the Railroad bank that Mr. Millikin started his banking business. Not only that, but he occupied the same room on Merchant street that had been occupied by the Railroad bank.

Through the failure of that bank many people had lost money, and their confidence in banks in general was considerably shaken.

SECOND HOME OF MILLIKIN BANK

Mr. Millikin in 1863 took in as partner J. Q. A. Odor, and the firm name was Millikin & Odor. Mr. Odor remained only a short time, however. In 1865 Jerome R. Gorin went into partnership with Mr. Millikin and the firm was known as James Millikin and Co. Though others entered the firm later, the business was conducted under that name until 1897 when it became the Millikin National bank.

Jerome R. Gorin remained with the Millikin bank until 1881, when he withdrew to start a new bank, and his son, O. B. Gorin, then became a partner. Milton Johnson, Parke Hammer and J. M. Brownback were others who acquired interests in the bank before 1897.

The bank has been placed in a semi-public position in the community through the will of Mr. Millikin, who passed away in 1909. Income from his estate, which owns more than one-half of the stock of the bank, is to be used "for charitable and educational purposes in Decatur".

After three years in the Merchant street location the bank moved

THIRD HOME OF MILLIKIN BANK

MILLIKIN BANK TODAY

to the north side of East Main street, east of the Morehouse & Wells store, where it carried on business until 1880. Its third home was on the corner of East Main and Water. There it has remained till now. Temporary quarters were twice used while building was going on. The present building was erected in 1895.

NATIONAL BANK OF DECATUR

OTHER BANKS

The National Bank of Decatur was started in 1873 as the Decatur National bank with a capital stock of $100,000. In 1893 it was reorganized as the National Bank of Decatur. Robert G. Hervey was the bank's first president.

For years this bank was located at the northwest corner of Prairie and Water streets, but in 1914 the bank moved into its beautiful new building which it had erected at the corner of South Park and Water streets.

As stated before the L. Burrows & Co. bank was merged with the National Bank of Decatur in 1912.

In 1881 a private banking business was established by Gorin & Bills and in 1883 it was reorganized as the Gorin, Dawson & Company, the firm consisting of J. R. Gorin, J. A. Dawson and Lewis B. Casner. They secured a room in Central block, where they were located for a time, and then moved to the new building they had erected at the corner of East Prairie and Merchant streets. The business was sold to L. B. Casner and in 1891 merged with the new Citizens National bank, of which Mr. Gorin was incorporator and first president. This bank has been located since 1910 at the corner of North Park and Water streets, occupying part of the five story building erected by the bank.

In 1929 the Citizens bank bought out the business of the Decatur State bank, which had been organized in 1920 by J. L. Burtschi. During the period of its existence the Decatur State bank was located on South Park street.

CITIZENS NATIONAL BANK

OTHERS NOW GONE

Decatur has had other banks with careers of varying lengths, but which failed to survive.

Back in the early '50s there was a bank on North Franklin street, David Kline being president and Charles Fuller cashier. It later became Fuller & Hatch and moved to the 100 block East Main street.

The Railroad bank, located on Merchant street, was incorporated April 20, 1854, with capital stock of $500,000. It flourished for several years, but failed in 1860. Incorporators were Peter D. Kline of Middlesex, N. J., and M. K. H. Reed of Sangamon county. Its president was Thomas Lewis and cashier S. D. Ayers.

Merchant street became known as Bank avenue, because of the location of this bank on that street at the time it was laid out.

Another early bank was the First National, started in 1866, at Water street and the New Square. T. O. Smith was president, John R. Race vice president, and Theo. W. Freese cashier.

Mention of this bank explains why there is no First National bank in Decatur today. The early bank which used that name became insolvent in 1870, and it was inexpedient for later banks to use the name of the defunct bank.

In 1870 William L. Hammer organized the banking company of Smiths, Hammer and Company. T. O. and E. O. Smith were the other members of the firm. They succeeded to the business which had been done by the First National bank, which failed about the time the new bank was organized. The bank was located in the room occupied afterwards by the Burrows bank. When the Smiths withdrew, their interest was taken by James C. Rucker and J. Q. A. Odor, and the firm became Rucker, Hammer & Co. The business continued until 1877.

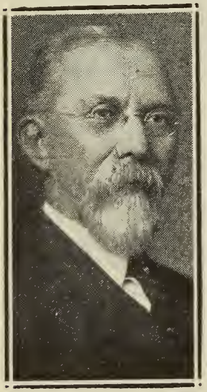
The Farmers Bank was organized in July, 1893, by L. B. Casner, L. E. Eyman and B. K. Durfee. It remained in business about five years.

Decatur's most recent and most sensational bank failure was that of the Farmers State Bank and Trust company, in 1925. This bank had been organized in 1913 as the Farmers and Merchants State bank. The business flourished for a time, but was brought to an abrupt end when the suicide of the cashier revealed a shortage of thousands of dollars in securities.

CHAPTER XLII

SOME LONG-TIME BUSINESS MEN

BACK in the days when it was popular to "go west and grow up with the country", a nineteen year old youth in Cumberland county, Pa., was struck with the fever. Having no money, he borrowed $65 from his father. With that $65—most of which was spent in making the trip to his destination, Decatur, Ill.—the young man entered upon a career which brought him a fortune, as well as the high regard of a city in whose progress he played an important part.

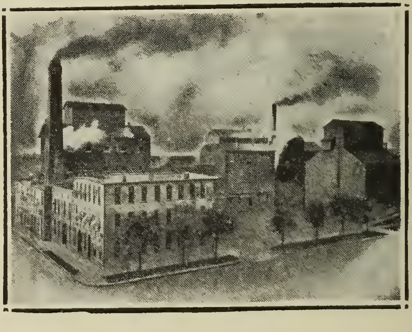


D. S SHELLA-BARGER

The young man was David S. Shellabarger, who arrived in Decatur May 28, 1856. He had been born in Pennsylvania July 11, 1837.

Though he first went into the lumber business, most of his life here was devoted to his milling interests. For forty years he directed activities of the Shellabarger mill at North Water and Cerro Gordo streets.

In 1863 the Great Western mill at Water street and the Great Western railroad was purchased by D. S. Shellabarger, Isaac Shellabarger and Ben Dillehunt, D. S. Shellabarger later buying the interests of the other two. For a number of years William Bowers was associated with Mr. Shellabarger in the firm. In 1888 Mr. Shellabarger became sole owner of the mill, and his three sons, W. L., F. D. and L. C. Shellabarger, came into the business. Extensive improvements, building additions and installation of new types of machinery put the mill into the front rank of such enterprises.



SHELLABARGER MILL

Before going into the milling business on North Water street Mr. Shellabarger had been connected with another flour mill. He and George Priest had bought out the Condell interest in the Henkle & Condell mill. That mill burned in 1859, but it was rebuilt. Mr. Shellabarger sold out his interest in that mill.

Mr. Shellabarger's business interests were not confined to Decatur. Recognizing the importance of location in the heart of the wheat growing country he established mills in Kansas. In both Illinois and Kansas he owned long strings of elevators. In 1903 Mr. Shellabarger disposed of his milling interests in Decatur to the American Hominy company.

Other activities also claimed his attention. For twenty years Mr. Shellabarger was head of a street car line. For fifteen years he was a member of the board of education, and most of that time was the president of the board. One term, in 1872, he was mayor of Decatur, and at various times served as a member of the city council. Once he was a candidate for congress, but was defeated for the office by William B. McKinley. He was identified with bank, coal and other business enterprises, among them the bagging factory. For seven years he was president of the National Bank of Decatur. He also was president of the Manufacturers and Consumers Coal company.

As a church leader he was known for years, and was chairman of the building committee of the Grace Methodist church when its present building was erected.

Mr. Shellabarger and Miss Anna Krone were married in 1862. She was the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. David Krone, proprietors of the Macon House. The Shellabargers' first home was on Jackson street, then at the southeast corner of Franklin and Eldorado, the house which for some years past has been used as an annex to the high school building.

Mr. Shellabarger was the first to respond when citizens of Decatur were asked to raise $100,000 to meet the offer of James Millikin in establishing the James Millikin University. His gift to that fund was $5,000.

John and Isaac Shellabarger, brothers, were the first of the Shellabarger family to come to Decatur. They had been through here on a horseback trip in 1836 and entered land. Later they came here to locate.

Isaac Shellabarger arrived in Decatur to make his home in 1852. He brought his family with him, making the trip in a carriage. Mr. Shellabarger built a frame house at the northwest corner of Franklin and William streets, and later bought the house at the corner of Eldorado and Franklin erected by G. D. Haworth.

For many years Isaac Shellabarger was connected with the business life of Decatur, being interested in the lumber business, in milling, agricultural works, banking and other enterprises. He assisted in establishing the gas company and the waterworks plant. He was of an inventive turn of mind, and invented a number of devices used in mills.

After his nephews, D. S. Shellabarger and William Bowers, became established here, Isaac Shellabarger sold his interests in the Shellabarger mill on North Water street to them. Later he became interested in the lumber and milling business in Wichita, Kan.

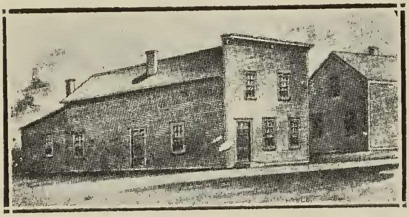
When John Shellabarger located in Decatur he established a lumber yard. He gave a position in that yard to David S. Shellabarger, when the latter came in 1856. John Shellabarger died soon after his young nephew came, and the young man took his place in the business.

II. MUELLER

Hieronymus Mueller came to Decatur in the year 1857 and opened a gun repair shop on the south side of the 100 block on West Main street. That was the beginning of the business career in Decatur of the man who later started the H. Mueller Manufacturing Company plant, which has developed into one of the city's biggest industries.

In 1870 Mr. Mueller was appointed city water tapper by Mayor M. Forstmeyer. The crude method of making service connections with city water mains was not to his liking, and it was not long until he had invented a water tapping machine and begun its manufacture.

The machine was such an advantage that the demand for it continually increased. Other inventions in the way of waterworks goods were brought out by Mr. Mueller. The frame building he was then occupying at 222 East



H. MUELLER'S FIRST SHOP AND RESIDENCE, 1857

MUELLER FACTORY, 1872-1895

Main street became too small to accommodate the enlarging business and necessitated putting up a new building. By 1885 Mr. Mueller was employing twenty or twenty-five men in his factory. That year he separated the gun repair shop from the factory, establishing the gun shop on Merchant street.

In 1886 Mr. Mueller took five of his sons into partnership with him. They were Henry, Robert, Fred, Philip and Adolph. His other son, Oscar, became a member of the firm in 1896.

In 1891 Mr. Mueller organized the Mueller Plumbing and Heating company. He disposed of his interest in this business, however, in 1896, and then sold his gun store in 1897, leaving him free to devote his attention to the increasing business of the H. Mueller Manufacturing company, which was incorporated in 1893.

The first unit of the Mueller plant on Cerro Gordo street was erected in 1895. Since that time, many new buildings have been added at that site, factories have been established in Sarnia, Can., and Port Huron, Mich., an iron foundry has been put into operation on East

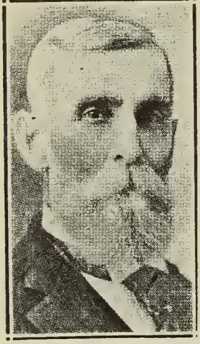
MUELLER FAMILY IN 1888

Left to right--Standing: Oscar, Adolph, Robert, Fred, Philip, Henry (three last now deceased). Seated: Mrs. Hieronymus Mueller (deceased), Leda Mueller (Cruikshank), Hieronymus Mueller (deceased).

Eldorado street, and the vitreous ware factory has been erected south of Decatur. Another business developed is the Mueller Fountain and Fixture company.

Mr. Mueller died from the effect of burns March 1, 1900. His wife, whose maiden name was Fredericka Bernhardt, died Jan. 26, 1911.

LOWBER BURROWS



L. L. BURROWS

His love for the beautiful in flowers and in music, and his social leadership gave Lowber Burrows a place all his own in the life of Decatur. He was the first person in Decatur and in this part of the state to have a private conservatory, where he grew varieties of rare and beautiful plants. Though Decatur was rather a rough town when Mr. Burrows first came, lacking culture and polish to which he had been accustomed in the east, he never lost any of the courtesy and dignity to which he had been bred.

The only public office Mr. Burrows ever consented to hold was that of member of the park board, from 1892 to 1899. He was president of the Decatur Musical Union which was organized in Decatur in 1861 and was interested in every means to advance the art of music. His home was a center for social life. In the St. John's church, in the Decatur club, in Macon lodge No. 8, A. F. & A. M., he was one of the leading members.

Yet he is as well remembered for his business life in Decatur as for the finer arts.

He came to Decatur through the influence of J. J. Peddecord, who gave him a position in his store.[1] From that time until the death of Mr. Peddecord, the two men never severed business relations.

When Mr. Burrows was twenty-one years old he went back to Philadelphia on a buying trip for the store, and on his return he brought something else besides the goods he had bought. He was married March 14, 1854, to Mary Lavinia Bering, a sister of J. E. Bering, and he brought his bride back with him. They came by train as far as Wyckles station, since that was as far as the railroad track had been laid at that time. The rest of the trip was made by stage.

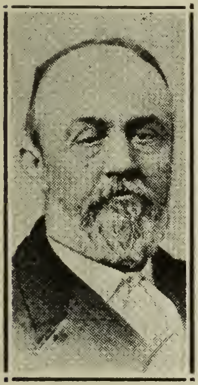
From that time on Mr. and Mrs. Burrows lived at 271 West North street, first in a small frame house, and later in the brick residence which Mr. Burrows built in 1868. It was torn down in 1929. The banking career of Mr. Burrows is told in another chapter. Mr.

Burrows remained in business until his death Oct. 16, 1910. Mrs. Burrows passed away Jan. 8, 1908. Mr. and Mrs. Burrows were the parents of five children.

SILAS PACKARD

Seventy-eight years Silas Packard lived in Decatur.

When he was only a year old, his parents, traveling in a covered wagon, loaded with household effects and seven children, left their home in Royalton, Vt., and headed for Macon county, Ill. They arrived in July of the year 1830. That was the hard year in Macon county. Soon after the family's arrival, Mr. Packard, the husband and father, fell a victim to malaria. He died on Sept. 8.


SILAS PACKARD

As a boy, Silas worked as a farm hand and earned as much as 25 cents a day. When a little older he carried mail and received 50 cents a day. When he was twenty years old he went to California, remaining in the west for several years. When he returned he had enough money to set himself up in business.

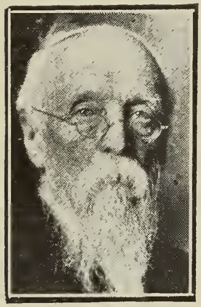
His business career in Decatur included a variety of enterprises. He ran a lumber yard, a dry goods store, a hardware store, conducted a farm, was interested in the banking business. His greatest success, however, was in real estate. For sixty-two years Mr. Packard owned the 80 acre tract once known as Riverside park, on the river east of Maffit and south of Cantrell streets.

Mr. Packard was married May 27, 1856, to Miss Mary Sawyer, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. John Sawyer. Mr. and Mrs. Packard had no children, but reared Mrs. Packard's niece, who later became Mrs. Robert I. Hunt. For seventeen years the Packards lived in their handsome residence on College hill. Mr. Packard passed away Jan. 27, 1908, and Mrs. Packard in 1914.

NATHAN L. KRONE

"Ask Nathan L. Krone. He'll remember."

This was the suggestion always made when some newspaper writer wanted to settle some point regarding early history of Decatur. For N. L. Krone was a sort of encyclopedia of information about Decatur's early days, and its succeeding years. He had come here in the year 1839, when he was seven years old, and he lived here, with the exception of a few years absence, until his death in 1916. He was a quiet, observant man with a mind that retained much, and he was always able to tell of events of early days which others had forgotten.



N. L. KRONE

Mr. Krone used to like to recall the first meal he ever ate in Decatur. He never forgot that meal, though it wasn't as much of a meal as many that he ate afterwards, but it meant the family had arrived at the end of their journey. That first meal was eaten at the camping ground on the Town Branch, near the present site of the Prairie street subway.[2]

The Krone family, the head of the family being David Krone, had come to Decatur from Pennsylvania. In that day it was a big undertaking to transplant a large family from Pennsylvania to Illinois. The trip was by water from Harrisburg, Pa., to Beardstown, Ill., then overland to Decatur. From Harrisburg to Pittsburgh the family journeyed via canals, then came by steamboat over the Allegheny, Ohio, Mississippi and Illinois rivers. More than two months time was required for making the journey.

The camp ground on the Town Branch was an attractive and convenient spot for newcomers to the city to use for camping until they could get settled in homes. There was a fine spring of water, plenty of fuel and a grassy little plateau where tents could be pitched. At the time the Krones arrived there was no empty house in the tiny village of Decatur, but they found a cabin near Casner where they lived for a few months. In November they moved in to Decatur to a house on William street, between Jackson and Franklin, which Watson Culver had built for them. The next spring David Krone became the proprietor of the Macon house, Decatur's first hotel, and that was the home of the Krone family then for many years. Later the Krones built a home on West William street.

Nathan Krone's first taste of business life was had when he started to work for the S. K. Thompson dry goods store in 1848. From there he went to the W. J. Condell store, and then, in 1852, he began working for King & Read, druggists. From that time on he was in the drug business. He worked for J. F. Roberts, W. C. Armstrong, and E. A. West, and then went into business for himself in 1893. He retired in 1915.

Mr. Krone often saw and talked with Abraham Lincoln, for Lincoln was a frequent visitor at the Macon house when Mr. and Mrs. David Krone were proprietors. He was at the Republican convention when Lincoln's name was suggested for the presidency and the Lincoln rails were carried in.

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[1] "Decatur's the place for an ambitious youth," said Mr. Peddecord to young Burrows when he met the young man in Philadelphia, where he had gone to buy goods for his store. Burrows at that time was looking for a place to go into business and settle down, the reason being that he was expecting to be married. Peddecord persuaded Burrows that no place offered more opportunity than Decatur, and to help matters along offered him a job in his store.

"Can I keep the books?" Burrows asked. Peddecord probably smiled to himself for his "bookkeeping" up to that time had amounted only to making notes on slips of paper and sticking them away in a drawer until the customers settled.

"Sure, you can keep books to your heart's content," answered Peddecord.

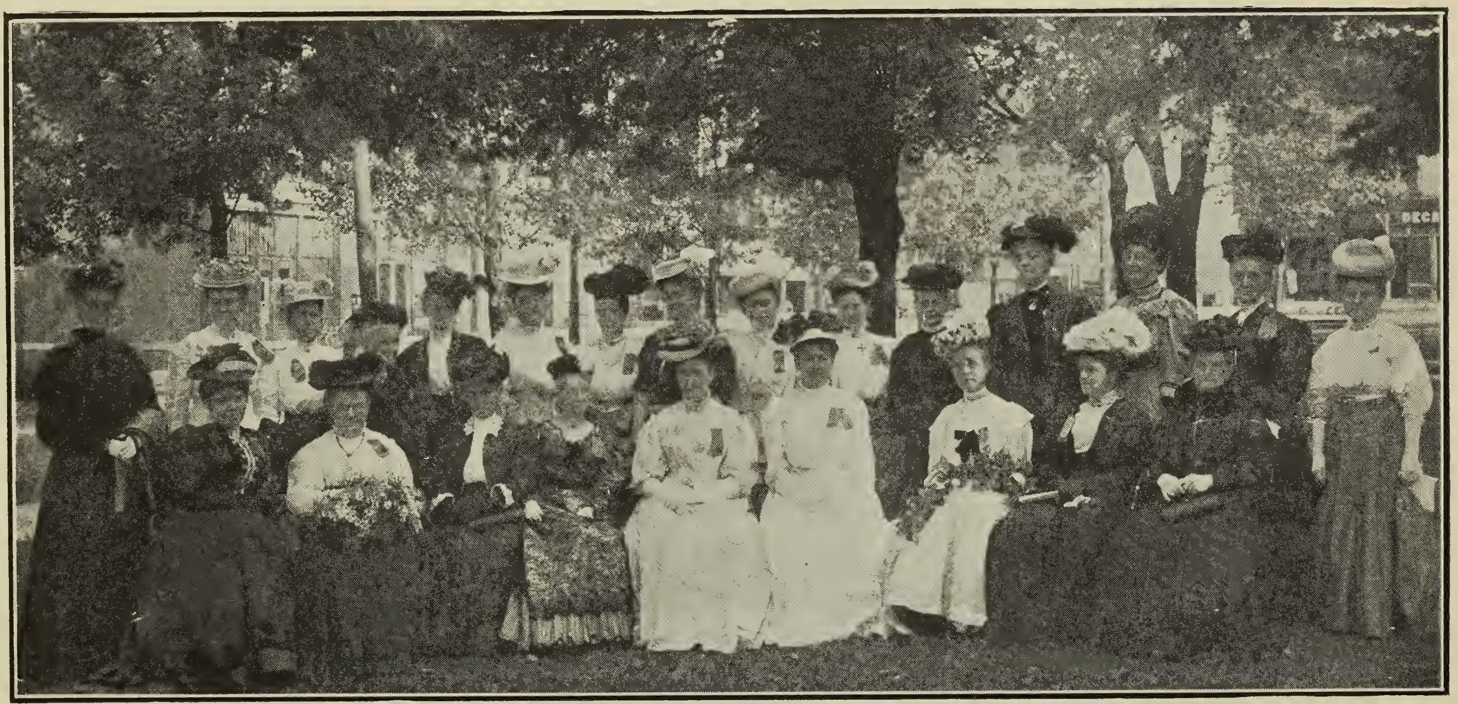
So Mr. Burrows became the bookkeeper and it wasn't long until he made considerable improvement in Mr. Peddecord's methods of keeping accounts.

[2] Being a curious little lad, the first thing Nathan Krone did on his arrival in Decatur was to take an exploration jaunt, to see what this new town had to offer in the way of sights.

The next morning after the family had reached Decatur Nathan sauntered over to a stable across the way. There he found a boy, and it doesn't take long for two boys to get acquainted. Nathan found out the other boy was Dick and Dick learned the little lad was called Nat. Dick was considerably older than Nat, but that didn't matter.

Dick was starting on a trip out to the Allen place east of Decatur and said Nat could go along. Nat went. Dick was after a load of corn and Nat helped him get it out of the field. They brought the corn in to the mill on East Prairie street. It was a bit of diplomacy on Dick's part to take Nat along, thereby having some help in getting that corn out, but Nat didn't care. He was hungry for companionship and he had found it. Dick was good company. That was the beginning of a long friendship between Nathan L. Krone and Richard J. Oglesby, afterwards war general, senator and governor of Illinois.

The two boys attended a school taught by Miss Fordyce in a little house on William street between Franklin and Jackson. The house had been built by Mr. Fordyce who owned a good deal of land and who used the house for a shepherd's home. Captain David L. Allen bought the land from Fordyce, and his brother, Lemuel Allen, established a private school there, which lasted two years.



SOME OF THE CHARTER MEMBERS OF THE WOMAN'S CLUB

This picture was taken in 1907, on the occasion of the 20th anniversary of the organization of the Woman's Club. In the picture are:

Standing, left to right—Mrs. Hiram Buck, Mrs. M. F. Metz, Mrs. Elmira Stoner, Mrs. Jane M. Johns, Mrs. M. C. Wilkin, Mrs. Harry Crea, Mrs. James F. Holliday, Mrs. Anna McClelland, Miss Maria Buckingham, Miss Josephine Anderson, Mrs. Laura W. Pahmeyer, Miss Chloe Murphy, Mrs. W. R. Bresie, Mrs. K. H. Roby, Mrs. S. J. Bumstead.

Seated—Mrs. S. K. Harwood (Darling), Mrs. Mary E. Haworth, Mrs. R. G. Wells, Mrs. J. N. Randall, Mrs. T. L. Evans, Mrs. D. C. Corley, Mrs. Eugenie M. Bacon, Mrs. W. W. Mason, Mrs. J. W. Haworth.

CHAPTER XLIII

THEATERS—CLUBS

POWERS Hall, Decatur's first theater, filled a long felt want in the city when it was provided in the year 1856 by William L. Powers. Up to that time Decatur citizens had to make use of hotels or other buildings for public programs or entertainments.

Mr. Powers built a block of store buildings in the 100 block East Main street, south side, and arranged the third floor for use as a theater, providing it with stage and seats. It was the first stage built in Decatur.

In that hall appeared some of the good theatrical companies of the day.

There the Decatur Musical Union, an important organization in Decatur for many years, presented concerts of various types. The hall was used for public gatherings and other events for which a large room was necessary.[1] It was told that one time when Abraham Lincoln was defending a case in court here the trial was moved from the court house to Powers hall as there was not room for the crowd in the court room. It was a murder case. Oglesby and Wait were the prosecuting attorneys and Mr. Lincoln represented the defendant.

MACON HALL

Macon hall was Decatur's next big public hall. It occupied the third floor of two buildings erected by Franklin Priest and Ben Dodson on Merchant street, at the corner of Lincoln Square. This hall boasted a sloping floor, and an unusually fine stage. It was the popular amusement house during the '60s.

FIRST OPERA HOUSE

The first opera house in Decatur was built by E. O. Smith in the 200 block on North Water street, west side, (the entrance is now No. 225) and for years it provided Decatur's entertainment. It was built in 1870, and was in operation until the Powers Grand Opera house was erected in 1889. A modern stage, private boxes, a balcony, were features of the new theater.

Nationally famous stars of the theatrical world appeared at Smith's Opera house, among them, Joseph Jefferson, Minnie Maddern Fiske, Edwin Booth, Madame Modjeska, Thomas Keene, and Lillian Russell.

Frank W. Haines, who had started his career as bill poster for Macon hall, became manager of Smith's Opera house in 1873, and continued in that position until it was discontinued when the new Powers Opera house was opened. Then he became manager for the Powers.

F W. HAINES

Hiram Brown was the first manager of Smith's Opera house. He was succeeded by Dan W. Brenneman and next came J. Q. A. Odor. Mr. Haines followed Mr. Odor. When it became known that Orlando Powers was willing to build a new theater in Decatur, but had taken no steps to do so because he did not want to go into competition with the Smith Opera house, Mr. Smith sent word to Mr. Powers that he would discontinue the old opera house if Mr. Powers would build a new one.

Mr. Powers then went ahead with his plans. After Smith's Opera house was discontinued as a theater, it was turned into business houses.

The Powers Opera house had its opening July 9, 1889. Richard J. Oglesby made a dedicatory address. That theater was as beautiful and modern as any to be found at the time.[2] It occupied the present site of the Hotel Orlando. The theater had a seating capacity of 1,500. It was used for all big public gatherings, as well as legitimate plays. In 1895 Fred Given became manager, and he was succeeded by Thomas Ronan.

POWERS GRAND OPERA HOUSE

The Powers Opera house was burned twice. After the first fire in 1895, the house was rebuilt. The second fire occurred in 1914, and this time the theater was replaced by a hotel, named Orlando, in honor of the head of the Powers family, which included two sons, Charles G. and Howard W. Powers, and a daughter, Mrs. Anabel Tilley.

OTHER THEATERS

By this time the amusement situation had changed. Moving picture shows had entered the field and were becoming more and more popular. Decatur's first "movie" was the Nickelodeon, at the northeast corner of William and Water streets, started in 1906 and run by H. W. Ellis. It was later known as the Colonial.

THE FIRST "MOVIE"

The city's largest and most beautiful theater, the Lincoln, was erected by Clarence A. Wait in 1915-1916, and first named the Lincoln Square.

Within the last twenty-five years Decatur has had a half dozen new theaters. Legitimate plays have given way almost entirely to vaudeville and talking pictures. Theaters in operation today are the Lincoln, Empress, Avon, Bijou, Alhambra, Crescent and Morrow's.

WOMAN'S CLUB

The Decatur Woman's club was organized May 31, 1887, in a meeting held in the chapel of the First Baptist church. That meeting was attended by about 150 women who became charter members of the club.

The club was an outgrowth of the Sorosis club, which in turn had grown from the Hillside club, a group of women living on East Eldorado street in the vicinity of Jackson, who had been brought together by Mrs. George D. Haworth. It was Mrs. Haworth who was instrumental in organizing the Woman's club.

Mrs. Haworth was elected the first president of the club, Mrs. M. M. T. Randall vice president, Mrs. Jane M. Johns secretary and Mrs. Carrie Gastman treasurer.

The Decatur organization became a charter member of both the General Federation of Woman's clubs, which was organized in 1891, and the State Federation, started in 1895.

For the first two years the club met in various buildings of the city.

In 1889 the club women formed a stock company, under the leadership of Laura Wikoff (Pahmeyer), and erected a club house at North Park and Franklin streets. It was one of the first buildings erected by women for the use of women's clubs in the United States,

MRS. MARY HAWORTH

From 1890 until 1909 the club used quarters in that building. The building project proved unprofitable, however, and the building was sold in 1904. The club continued to meet there, however, renting the first floor room. In 1909 the club moved to the Y. W. C. A. building where it remained some years, then moved to the Powers building, and then to the Congregational church, where it remained until its present quarters were secured.

FIRST WOMAN'S CLUB BUILDING

One of the early pieces of work done by the Woman's club was to bring about the election of a woman to the board of education. Mrs. Isabella T. Stafford was the first woman to serve in that capacity. Among the active Woman's club members who have served on the board have been, Mrs. Minnie P. Hostetler, Mrs. Haworth and Mrs. Inez J. Bender. Mrs. Stafford was one of the organizers of the W. C. T. U., and served as president.

During the years that have passed since its beginning, the Woman's club has accomplished many things. It has sponsored educational courses and lectures, sewing classes for girls and regular study meetings. It has taken part in civic enterprises and charity work. It was active in war work. It took over the first sale of Red Cross seals. It urged the teaching of sewing and cooking in the public schools in a day when the idea was ridiculed.

Two of the local club members served in state federation offices. Mrs. George R. Bacon was state federation president in 1902-1904, and Mrs. Haworth served a term as state treasurer. Mrs. Bacon also was state chairman of correspondence for the General Federation from June, 1898, to October, 1902.

For years the club had looked forward to the time when it could have a home of its own, and that was finally accomplished in 1928

PRESENT WOMAN'S CLUB BUILDING

with the purchase of the house at 308 West Main street from Dawson and Wikoff. The purchase price was $21,000.

W. H. Linn, one of the founders of Linn & Scruggs, built that house in 1888 and lived in it some years. After his death it was the home of his son, W. W. Linn, and daughter, Mrs. M. A. DeForest. W. W. Linn died in 1904. Mrs. DeForest sold the house in 1922 to Dawson and Wikoff.

DECATUR CLUB

At a meeting held May 22, 1883, in the grand jury room of the court house, the Decatur club was organized. The call to organize was issued by J. E. Bering, L. L. Haworth, L. L. Burrows, B. K. Durfee, W. H. Linn, S. J. Bumstead and E. P. Vail. First officers were: President, C. A. Ewing; vice president, L. L. Burrows; secretary, S. J. Bumstead; treasurer, W. H. Linn; directors, J. E. Bering, I. A. Buckingham, B. K. Durfee, L. L. Haworth, W. C. Johns, R. P. Lytle. The club had 100 charter members.

The Decatur club has had a prosperous life, and has been influential in the social and business life of the city. It has always occupied quarters at Water and North Park streets, first on the third floor of the Haworth building, and then on the fifth floor of the Citizens bank building when that building was erected.

From the beginning the Decatur club was more than a social club. Before the organization of the Association of Commerce, or the Business Men's association before that, it was the representative business men's organization of the city. It took the lead in promoting various civic and industrial enterprises. Organization of the Association of Commerce was brought about by leaders in the activities of the Decatur club. Many big public and social projects were launched in gatherings in the Decatur club rooms.

For some years the club considered having a home of its own, resulting in decision to erect a club house at Prairie avenue and North Church street. Contract was let in May, 1930, and work is under way at this writing. The site was purchased for $50,000, and the building is expected to cost $150,000.

DECATUR COUNTRY CLUB

The Decatur Country club has been in existence since 1899. The idea of forming such a club was originated by W. W. Linn. One Sunday afternoon in 1899 he and Lucien Shellabarger and a few others interested met in the Shellabarger home, and the organization of the club followed. It was incorporated Sept. 8, 1899. Dr. William Barnes was the first president, serving for a number of years.

Soon after organization the club leased about 65 acres of land at the south end of Jasper street, fronting on the river, from D. A. Maffit and a club house was erected, which was dedicated July 4, 1900. In 1911 the club purchased the land. Years later, after the land had been taken into the city and taxes and other costs became heavy, the club decided to move. A new site across the lake was purchased in 1928, and a beautiful new club house, costing $50,000, was erected. It was formally opened July 4, 1929. The former club grounds were sold to a syndicate and developed for residence property.

OTHER CLUBS

For some years the Calumet club flourished in Decatur. It was organized in the '80s, and handsome quarters were fitted up for it in the Powers Opera house building, erected in 1889. The club did not long survive the destruction of its headquarters by the fire of 1895, when the opera house burned.

In the days when bicycling was popular the Decatur Wheelmen's club was a well known body. It was organized Aug. 15, 1895. J. H. Krebs was the first president. When the bicycling fad waned, the club (in 1901) was turned into a social organization, known as the Iroquois club with headquarters on the third floor of the Stine building in Central Block. The World war took away so many of its members that it finally disbanded.

The Decatur Fishing club was organized Aug. 24, 1904, and developed attractive club grounds southwest of Decatur. It is now called the South Side Country club.

A more recent addition to the clubs of the city is the Sunnyside Golf club, incorporated Oct. 28, 1921. Its beautiful golf course and club house are located west of Decatur on Route 10.

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[1] From Christmas, 1863, to Jan. 1, 1864, Tom Thumb, Lavina and Minnie, and Commodore Nutt played an engagement in Powers hall. They had been billed for a one night stand, but they were snowbound here. At the conclusion of one performance a collection was taken up, carried to the stage and spread on the table. With the exception of one silver quarter the entire collection was shin plasters. Commodore Nutt held the silver coin aloft, and yelled "a silver quarter! and I would like to know who the donor is!"

Following a lecture March 25, 1869, by Colonel Robert G. Ingersoll on "Progress, Religious, Social and Political", newspapers of the city were busy printing protests from different preachers.

[2] Once, when Joseph Jefferson appeared at the Powers opera house, he came before the curtain and told a little story concerning Decatur.

Years before, when he was a boy, he had been traveling with his father, who was with a show company. The company was in Springfield, and expected to appear in Decatur next. Springfield had just adopted a law taxing traveling actors. The company had no money to pay a license, being very much financially embarrassed, and was unable to engage a lawyer.

"A slender young man came up to my father and said he was a lawyer, and would take my father's part," said Mr. Jefferson. "Father said he had no money to pay a lawyer. 'That doesn't matter,' the young man said, 'you are a stranger and are being persecuted. I'll not stand to see anyone persecuted.' He took the case and won it, thereby making it possible for them to appear in Springfield. They made enough money there to pay their bills and come on to Decatur. The young lawyer, we learned afterwards, was Abraham Lincoln."

CHAPTER XLIV

CIVIL WAR

DECATUR was stunned Sunday morning, April 14, 1861, when the news came that Fort Sumpter had fallen. It was almost unbelievable. Though war had been threatening, few believed that an open break between the north and the south would come.

The news was read from the pulpits of the churches, and it was received in awe and silence. Though people recognized its significance, they had not the faintest idea that it was the beginning of a long four year bloody struggle.

But the American flag had been fired upon. The fort had surrendered. That was enough. That day patriotism burst forth as it had never been seen before.

Every family in Decatur hunted up its flag. Within a short time the banner was waving in the breeze from public buildings and from homes.

When the news was confirmed the following day and the president's proclamation asking for 75,000 volunteers came, Decatur was aroused. The spirit of war had entered. Patriotic zeal spread as the hours passed by. Printing presses were put into service to make flags. Every man and woman was supplied with an individual flag to wear. It was almost unsafe to be without one. Every bit of red, white and blue material to be found was brought forth. Patriotic speeches filled the air.[1]

Within an hour after Governor Richard Yates had issued his call for Illinois volunteers John P. Post had opened a recruiting office in Powers hall. Enlistments poured in as fast as the names could be written. The next day I. N. Martin opened a recruiting office in the court house.

By Tuesday night two full companies of 100 men each had been sworn into service. They hurried to Springfield and became Companies A and B of the Eighth Regiment, of which Richard J. Oglesby was made colonel.[2]

Isaac C. Pugh was captain of Company A.

MADE FLAG

The women folks couldn't enlist but there was something they could do and they lost no time in doing it. That was the making of the flag for the "boys" to carry into the war. F. L. Hays was rushed to St. Louis to buy the silk needed for the emblem, and as soon as he was back work began. Every woman wanted to have a hand in the making of that flag. So determined were they to have a share, that it was found necessary to let each do only a few stitches. No one was allowed to complete even one star. In many of the stars each point was made by a different one. The women met at the Revere house to make the flag, and more than 100 put stitches into it.

When the Eighth Regiment was sent to Cairo a stop was made in Decatur for the presentation of the flag. The two Decatur companies were given an hour's leave from the train for the exercises. The presentation of the flag took place in Central park in the presence of a huge crowd.

Following the singing of "America" by the crowd and prayer by Father Stamper, the presentation speech was made by Mrs. Cal Allen, while Hattie White (Mrs. Hays) held the flag staff. The eloquent response made by Richard J. Oglesby swayed the emotions of the crowd to a high pitch. Tears and prayers and shouts were mingled. Gifts were showered on the departing soldiers. Finally the hour was up, the order to march came, and Decatur's first contingent of soldiers was off to war!

It would take volumes to tell the complete story of Macon county in the war. Only brief mention can be made here of the part this county played in the great conflict. The lists of men who participated are to be found in all the histories of Macon county heretofore published in book form and are easily available, so space will not be taken for them here. Before the war was over, Macon county had furnished about 2,500 men for the army.

EIGHTH REGIMENT

The Eighth Regiment was put on guard duty at Cairo. Besides the two Decatur companies in this regiment were the following: Company C, recruited at Charleston; Company D, at Olney and Springfield; Company E, at Peoria; Company F, at Pekin; Company G, at Pittsfield and Griggsville; Company H, at Vandalia; Company I, at Lawrenceville, and Company K, at Bloomington.

The enlistment period was for three months, and at its expiration the regiment was mustered out. Most of the men reenlisted for three years.

The regiment had four different commanders during its war service. R. J. Oglesby, the first colonel, was promoted to brigadier-general, later to major-general. Succeeding him came Colonel Frank L. Rhodes, Colonel John P. Post, and Colonel Josiah A. Sheetz.

Isaac C. Pugh left the regiment to organize the Forty-first Regiment and his place was taken by Herman Lieb, who later became brigadier-general.

The Eighth Regiment remained at Cairo until October, then was sent to Bird's Point, Mo. During the year of its service the regiment saw some of the heaviest fighting of the conflict.

Among the engagements in which the regiment participated were Fort Henry, Fort Donelson, Shiloh, and Corinth.

The regiment was mustered out on May 4, 1866, at Baton Rouge.

TWENTY-FIRST REGIMENT

The Twenty-first Regiment, usually called Grant's Regiment, was the second regiment recruited in Decatur.

It was composed of Company A, from Macon county; Company B, from Cumberland county; Company C, from Piatt county; Company D, from Douglas county; Company E, from Moultrie county; Company F, from Edgar county; Company G, from Clay county; Company H, from Clark county; Company I, from Crawford county, and Company K, from Jasper county.

The regiment was assembled at Mattoon. It was mustered into state service for thirty days, May 15, 1861, by Captain U. S. Grant, who had been assigned to duty as a muster officer.[3] During this period of service it was known as the Seventh Congressional District Regiment.

The regiment was mustered into United States service on June 28, with Colonel U. S. Grant in command. He was with the regiment two months, until he was made a brigadier-general. Then J. W. S. Alexander became colonel.

The first few months of service of the Twenty-first Regiment were in Missouri and Arkansas. It then became a part of Buell's Army of the Ohio. Among the well known frays in which it participated were the siege of Corinth, and the battles of Perryville, Ky., Murfreesboro, Tenn., and Chickamauga.

The Twenty-first had a brilliant career. It was mustered out at San Antonio, Tex., Dec. 16, 1865.

THIRTY--FIFTH INFANTRY

The Thirty-fifth Illinois Volunteer Infantry, which was organized at Decatur July 3, 1861, was known as Colonel G. A. Smith's Independent Regiment of Illinois Volunteers. As such it was accepted in the army on July 23, 1861, and six months afterward it became the Thirty-fifth.

The regiment served several months in Missouri, trying to drive the confederate general, Price, out of that state. It was in the battle of Pea Ridge, March 6, 7, 8. There Smith's horse was shot out from under him and he was badly wounded. The Thirty-fifth regiment participated in the siege of Corinth, the engagements of Perryville, Stone River, Chickamauga, Mission Ridge, and others, under Major McIlwain. McIlwain was killed at Kenesaw Mountain, June 22, 1864. The regiment was mustered out at Springfield, Sept. 27, 1864.

FORTY-FIRST ILLINOIS

The Forty-first Illinois Infantry led by Colonel Isaac C. Pugh, later brigadier-general, won its title, "The Fighting Forty-first", deservedly. It participated in a score of bloody battles and made such an outstanding record as to make itself famous in war annals. Two of the companies in this regiment, A and B, were recruited from Macon county.

It was organized by Colonel Pugh in August, 1861.

Decatur and vicinity furnished many officers. Besides Colonel Pugh, there were Lieutenant Colonel Ansel Tupper, Lieutenant Willis S. Oglesby, Adjutant Bartley J. Pugh, Quartermaster Henry C. Bradsby, Surgeon William Gray, Captain John H. Nale, First Lieutenant M. F. Kanan, Lieutenant George R. Steele, all of Decatur; Major John Warner of Clinton, and Captain John Armstrong of Blue Mound.

Among the battles in which they participated were Fort Henry, Fort Donelson, Shiloh, Pearl River, the siege of Corinth and the siege of Vicksburg.

Seventy or more men of the Decatur companies lost their lives. Lieutenant Colonel Ansel Tupper and Lieutenant Willis Oglesby were killed at Shiloh, April 6, 1862. Both were buried on the field of battle, the bodies later being brought to Decatur, and now they rest in Greenwood cemetery.

The Forty-first returned to Vicksburg, Dec. 16, 1863, and went into camp on Big Black river. Two hundred of the men reenlisted and took part in the battle of Kenesaw Mountain, and were with Sherman in his famous march from Atlanta to the sea.

CAVALRY COMPANY

Company I of the Seventh Illinois Cavalry was recruited in Decatur by Arthur J. Gallagher, who was elected its captain. This was the only company for the cavalry service which was recruited in Decatur. It was mustered into service, Oct. 13, 1861, at Camp Butler, and became a part of Colonel William Pitt Kellogg's regiment.

Captain Gallagher resigned his post on June 20, 1862.

The Seventh Illinois cavalry was in service in Mississippi, Missouri, Tennessee, and other states, making a fine record. It was mustered out Nov. 17, 1865.

IN SIXTY-THIRD REGIMENT

Company H, which was attached to the Sixty-third Regiment, was made up mostly of Macon county men. This regiment was organized at Anna, Ill., in December, 1861, with Francis Moro commanding. It was mustered into service April 10, 1862, and was sent first to Cairo.

Later the regiment was sent into Kentucky and was assigned to the Fourth Brigade, Seventh Division, Seventeenth Army Corps, Brigadier-General John A. Logan commanding the division.

Moro resigned as colonel of the regiment Sept. 29, 1862, and was succeeded by Lieutenant Colonel J. B. McCown. The regiment made a fine record of service during the war. It traveled a total of 6,453 miles, marching for 2,250 miles, the rest being covered by water or railroad. The regiment was mustered out July 13, 1865.

ONE HUNDRED FIFTEENTH REGIMENT

Decatur had a "fighting parson" as well as fighting laymen. He was Rev. Jesse H. Moore, able Methodist preacher, who felt that he could do his country more good at the front than at home in a pulpit. He was popular as a patriotic speaker, and his patriotism went far enough to take him into the thick of the fight.

Assisted by Captain Frank L. Hays and several other men, Rev. Mr. Moore organized Companies E and F in Decatur and they became a part of the One Hundred Fifteenth Regiment.

The regiment was mustered into service Sept. 13, 1862, and ordered to the field Oct. 4. Its first few months of service were in Kentucky. The men underwent such hardships during the first six months that 200 were lost by death or disablement, yet there was not one casualty in fighting. The regiment took part in the Chickamauga campaign, being part of what became known as "The Iron Brigade of Chickamauga". The adjutant-general's report says of this campaign:

"The One Hundred Fifteenth was in the most exposed position of any regiment in that bloody battle and held its place against great odds". It received special recognition for its gallantry.

This regiment remained in Tennessee, when Sherman's army marched to the sea. It was mustered out at Nashville, Tenn., June 11, 1865.

THE ONE HUNDRED SIXTEENTH

Macon county furnished nearly the entire personnel of the One Hundred Sixteenth Regiment. Of the 980 men and officers, 730 were from this county. The rest came from Piatt, Moultrie, Shelby, Christian, Sangamon and Dewitt counties. Nineteen men from Macon county served as captains. Two were killed and three died of wounds.

The One Hundred Sixteenth mobilized at the Macon county fair grounds, known as Camp Macon, (now Fairview park) and was mustered into service Sept. 30, 1862. The regiment became a part of General W. T. Sherman's army and saw its first fighting at Chickasaw Bayou. Other engagements in which it made a brilliant record, were Vicksburg, Chickamauga, Mission Ridge, Chattanooga, Lookout Mountain, Kenesaw Mountain and Stone Mountain.[4] The regiment took part in the grand review before the president in Washington in May, 1865.

When General Giles A. Smith was wounded in the fighting at Mission Ridge, the command of the brigade fell to Colonel N. W. Tupper. The ability he showed in that command would no doubt have led to his promotion to brigadier-general, but he became ill and was obliged to return home to die.

The last fighting done by the regiment was at Bentonville. It was mustered out June 7, 1865.

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[1] As an illustration of the excitement that prevailed at the beginning of the war, the story is told that one day V. H. Parke was conducting an auction sale of a consignment of bankrupt goods from Indianapolis. A big crowd had collected for the sale, and everything was going merrily when suddenly the sound of a fife and drum coming down the street was heard. The crowd rushed out to see, leaving the auctioneer with a piece of goods half sold. That was the last he saw of his crowd. It was following the fife and drum and never came back. The auction sale had to be abandoned.

[2] The Eighth regiment was really the first regiment offered Governor Yates, but it did not receive that rank owing to the delay caused by the formalities of the resignation of Richard J. Oglesby as state senator in order to accept the colonelship of the regiment.

[3] One day early in the war, before General Grant had become known, according to a story told, he tried to purchase a uniform in Decatur at the J. R. Race clothing store, and was refused credit for it, not being a promising looking candidate for credit. He had been brought into the store by George W. Baker, but he was a stranger here. Mr. Race afterward said that the reason Grant didn't get a uniform was that the store did not have one to fit him. Mr. Race got acquainted with Grant later, one time walking from Camp Yates to Springfield with him. Grant was in Decatur another time early in the war, when he spent some time here between trains on his way to Springfield. During the wait here he took the opportunity to drill his company of men

recruited in Galena, using a plot of ground north of the Wabash. Staves borrowed from a cooper shop took the place of guns during the drill. Grant purchased his first war horse in Decatur, buying the animal from John Slaughter.

[4] The original flag carried by the One Hundred Sixteenth was destroyed by a shell at Vicksburg. Remnants of it, stained with the blood of Samuel Baty, are now in the state museum at Springfield. Baty was carrying the flag and was killed when the shell exploded. When the women of Decatur learned of the fate of the flag, they immediately made a new one for the regiment, meeting in Powers hall for the work. Many women put stitches in that flag. The emblem went through the rest of the war with the regiment, and the remains of it, torn with bullet holes, has been ever since a cherished possession of survivors of the regiment.

AT GETTYSBURG DEDICATION

Like a voice from the past is an account of that memorable day, Nov. 19, 1863, when Abraham Lincoln delivered the dedication address at Gettysburg cemetery, the address now familiar to every school child. The account was written by a Decatur woman, Mrs. Clarissa Sterrett, who was there to see and to hear for herself. At that time she was Miss Clarissa Cline, and her home was at Petersberry, York county, Pa., about thirty-five miles from Gettysburg.

The trip to Gettysburg was a big one for that day. It took three days to make the journey there and back. The party traveled in a rockaway (buggy), and the roads were poor. The young woman was so impressed with the events at Gettysburg that she wrote down her impressions at once.

It was not only the speech, but the setting for it that one could not forget. The blood-covered ground plowed up by cannon balls, the broken tombstones, the graves with loose dirt still upon them, trees and buildings bullet-marked—no wonder it was impressive when Lincoln said: "We cannot consecrate, we cannot hallow this ground."

The account written of the trip was as follows:

"Three miles from Gettysburg, Wednesday, Nov. 18, 1863.

"Have taken lodging at a farm house for the night. Several persons stopped since we did and inquired for lodging but could not be accommodated. The sky is overshadowed with clouds and it is pretty cold. Our host's name is Brinkerhoff.

"Thursday evening, 5:20. Left our teams at Mr. Brinkerhoff's this morning and walked to Gettysburg and beyond to the battlefield. Took a look at rifle-pits on Cemetery hill and then passed on half a mile to where some of the hardest fighting was done. There on the top of a hill in the woods fortifications were thrown up and the trees were completely riddled with bullets. We spent some time on this hill and while there the artillery on Cemetery hill fired a salute of twenty-five guns, giving the different military companies encamped around the town the signal to march into town. After some time we crossed over to the cemetery and examined that ground, and thinking the procession would soon arrive we entered the ring which was guarded and got a position near the stand. The crowd was immense and by the time the procession came it had become difficult to stand. After the president, governors, heads of department, reporters, etc., had been seated a space of a few feet which had been kept clear for the procession to pass around was allowed to be filled up and a rush was immediately made for the platform. Fortunately we were near it when the rush was made and gained a position on the platform. We then had a fine opportunity not only of seeing the people and position but also of hearing the oration.

"The band played an air after which a prayer was offered, followed by 'Old Hundred' by the band. The oration was then delivered by Hon. Edward Everett, after which a dirge composed by Professor Longfellow for the occasion, was chanted by the choir. Mr. Lincoln was then introduced to the assembled thousands when three deafening cheers rent the air, and as he commenced speaking the crowd again burst into loud huzzas.

"The president made a few very impressive dedicatory remarks and on taking his seat was again enthusiastically cheered. The choir then chanted another dirge, after which three cheers were given for each of the different governors present, when the benediction was pronounced and the company was dismissed.

"The procession again formed headed by a band of music, followed by the distinguished men present. The military came into town by another road and marched through the town. A representative was present from each state. Each branch of the military service was represented, infantry, cavalry and artillery. The marine band of Washington was present. Gettysburg was completely jammed up.

"A delegation from the army of the Potomac was present with a flag bearing the inscription, 'Army of the Potomac, July 1st and 2d,' on the one side and on the other, "In Memory of Our Fallen Comrades.'

"The cemetery is considerably damaged, tombstones broken, large holes in the iron fence broken by cannon balls and the ground ploughed up in places. This is a beautiful place. It overlooks the town and the battlefield; Roundtop off in the distance with a large flag floating from its summit, Culp's hill, which we had been on before, in full view. At the foot of Culp's hill a farm house stands which is entirely deserted. Every board has been torn off the barn and a dead horse is still lying in the stable. Everything torn up about the house, window panes all gone and all the fences.

"Almost every house in Gettysburg had a flag flung to the breeze. In the center of the diamond a long pole was erected with a large flag, 20 by 30 feet on the top." "C. C."

CHAPTER XLV

CIVIL WAR

(Concluded)

THE four years of war were times of stress and anxiety in Decatur. Time after time the call for more troops was answered by Macon county men until there were large numbers of them at the front, many of whom never returned. To the families and friends of these men, the daily war bulletins were of absorbing interest. These bulletins were read from the balcony of the building now occupied by the West drug store. There were scenes of grief and joy, grief when word came of some life being taken and joy for the victories of the Union army.

The bulletin which stirred Decatur the most, which brought the most intense feeling and sorrow, was the report after the battle of Pittsburg Landing, April 6-7, 1862, when the names of Colonel Ansel Tupper and Lieutenant Willis S. Oglesby and about eighteen other Decatur men appeared in the list of dead in the Forty-first Regiment. All Decatur mourned that day.

WOMEN'S WORK

The war brought work, as well as anxiety, to the women at home. Nobly they took up their task for the cause of the Union. It would take an entire book to tell of their activities in relief work for the soldiers.

Their first work was in aiding the sick soldiers at Cairo, to whom they sent supplies. But after they learned that many of the supplies sent never reached the men, they realized the importance of organized effort. So, in November, 1861, they organized the Sick and Wounded Soldiers' Aid Society of Decatur, (the name later shortened to the Hospital Aid Society) to work in cooperation with the National Sanitary Commission.

The women had their first taste of what war meant after the battle of Fort Donelson, Feb. 15, 1862, when the information came that 2,108 wounded soldiers were waiting for help on the battlefield. Many of those wounded men were from Macon county.

From the court house window John Moreland gave the call, through a trumpet, for workers. Before noon Judge S. F. Greer's home was filled from top to bottom with women rolling bandages, sorting rags, scraping lint, and arranging supplies. Drs. W. A. Barnes and E. W. Moore directed the work. In a few hours several boxes and a barrel were ready to go.

Day after day the women's hands were busy. When more room was needed the workshop was transferred to the Masonic hall, and later other rooms were put to use. Trains filled with wounded soldiers passed through Decatur constantly, and all were met at the station by the women. With baskets of delicacies on their arms they made their way among the sufferers, to whom the words of comfort and encouragement and sympathy meant as much as the food and drink.

Caring for the destitute families of soldiers was another phase of the work of the women during the war. With the breadwinner away at the front, or perhaps killed in battle, many a family found itself without means of support, and there was much to do to aid such as these.

A dark picture in the story of relief work at home was the caring for the war refugees sent up from the south. Filthy, ungrateful, illiterate, vermin-infested wretches were dumped at various stations along the railroads, and the first dose which Decatur was given in August, 1862, was enough to make the women rebel at having anything to do with them.[1]

After one attempt to feed and clean up the unwelcome visitors, the Aid society insisted on turning the job over to the county and city authorities, and buildings at the county fair grounds were put to use to provide shelter for the next bunch, which came in October.

Vivid accounts of the task of trying to do something for these refugees are given in Mrs. Jane M. Johns' "Personal Recollections". Mrs. Johns was one of the active members of the Aid society and had a part in the refugee work.

The money needed to carry on the work of the Hospital Aid society was raised in various and sundry ways by the women. Entertainments of all kinds and descriptions, suppers, balls, anything to make money, were tried. It was for this purpose that the Decatur Musical Union came into being, and many a dollar was brought in through the activities of this organization.

Mrs. H. C. Johns was the first president of the Hospital Aid society. Other officers that year (1861-62) were Mrs. Lockwood, vice president, and Mrs. Close, treasurer. The next year the officers were

Mrs. S. F. Greer, president; Mrs. Ryan, vice president; Mrs. Elliott, secretary, and L. L. Burrows, treasurer.

The third year (1863-64) was the society's busiest year. Officers that year were Mrs. E. J. Evans, president, Mrs. Ira Barnes, vice president, Mrs. H. C. Johns, secretary, and L. L. Burrows, treasurer. Directresses were Mrs. J. Ryan, Mrs. Locke, Mrs. J. Mansfield, Mrs. T. Hays, Mrs. S. Smith.

Officers the last year (1864-65) were Mrs. James Millikin, president, Mrs. S. F. Greer, vice president, Mrs. Jack Jones, secretary, and Mrs. J. R. Gorin, treasurer. Directresses named were Mrs. Winholtz, Mrs. S. Smith, Mrs. Bright, Miss M. Carter and Mrs. S. Packard. Mrs. Greer and Mrs. Jones resigned their offices. Mrs. R. H. Murphey was named secretary in Mrs. Jones' place. The society disbanded May 19, 1865.

STATE SANITARY FAIR

The Decatur Hospital Aid Society was the organization which conceived the idea of the state sanitary fair, which was held at the fair grounds in Decatur on Sept. 12-17, 1864, and which netted $29,736.92 for the Sanitary Commission's work. The fair was approved by the State Agricultural society and was held under the auspices of the Sanitary commission. Every county in the state was enlisted in the undertaking and help was freely given. The fair was formally opened by Governor Richard Yates on Sept. 13, and for the next few days people poured into Decatur from all over the state to attend. The Decatur women had a big part in this undertaking, which turned out to be a huge success in every particular.

Two other big fairs were held for the benefit of the state sanitary commission. The Northwestern fair held in Chicago in October, 1863, netted $60,000. Another fair was held in Chicago in 1865.

PHYSICIANS IN SERVICE

Nearly as important as the fighting itself was the work done during the war by Decatur physicians in caring for the sick and the wounded soldiers. Those who did not go to the battle fields aided in the relief work done at home.

One of the surgeons whose war service was widely recognized was Dr. S. T. Trowbridge. It was he who was credited with saving the life of General R. J. Oglesby, after Oglesby had been wounded at Corinth. General Grant detailed Dr. Trowbridge to take care of the Oglesby case, and when Dr. Trowbridge arrived at the wounded man's bedside he found all hope for his life abandoned. For weeks Oglesby's life hung in the balance, but at length under the skillful care of Dr. Trowbridge he began to improve.

Dr. Trowbridge and Dr. Charles Dennison went into the service with the 8th regiment and served during the war.

Dr. Ira Curtis and Dr. H. C. Johns volunteered their services after the battle of Fort Donelson and went to Cairo to care for the wounded men that had been sent north from the battlefields. Dr. Curtis suffered a stroke of paralysis while in charge of a hospital at Mound City, and was crippled for the rest of his life. Dr. Johns was sent to the battlefields, remaining in the vicinity of Donelson and Iuka for three months. He was afterwards commissioned as surgeon of the 129th Illinois and served in that capacity two years.

Dr. W. J. Chenoweth went into service as the surgeon for Colonel Gus Smith's regiment, the Thirty-fifth Illinois, and he took care of Colonel Smith when he was wounded at Perryville. Dr. Chenoweth resigned his post Dec. 14, 1862.

Dr. William M. Gray, chief surgeon of the Forty-first regiment, was in service eight months, then was obliged to resign because of ill health. Later he served a few months as surgeon for the Sixty-third infantry.

Dr. E. W. Moore was surgeon of the One Hundred Fifteenth, with Dr. Nelson Blalock of Mt. Zion as his assistant. He resigned April 17, 1863, and Dr. Blalock resigned July 27, 1863.

Dr. Ira N. Barnes was surgeon of the One Hundred Sixteenth Illinois, with Dr. John Heckleman as first assistant, and Dr. J. A. W. Hostetler as second assistant.

Dr. Addison C. Douglas of Blue Mound also was in service. He enlisted in the One Hundred Fifteenth regiment as hospital steward. According to the record, he was discharged May 1, 1863, to become contract surgeon.

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[2] After word came that Decatur was getting a quota of war refugees, and arrangements were being made to take care of them, some of the people went to the train to meet them with the idea of entertaining the visitors in their homes. But when they saw the "guests", they changed their minds. One look was enough!

CHAPTER XLVI

DECATUR ARMY LEADERS

DECATUR had the distinction of furnishing five generals to the nation in the Civil war. Besides these, it gave many lesser officers who performed noble service and whose valor will always be remembered. Some of them made the supreme sacrifice, giving up their lives to the cause.

The story of General Richard J. Oglesby, who became major-general in the army is told in another chapter.

When Oglesby was named colonel of the Eighth regiment he found himself in command of his old time friends, companions, neighbors, men who were used to calling him "Dick". He recognized the importance of making them realize that they were soldiers and under his command. One day he said to them:

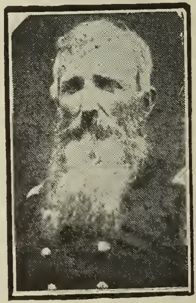
"I've no doubt that most of you think you know as much about how this thing should be run as I do, and I expect you do, but you have chosen me and I have been commissioned by the governor to run it and I am going to do it to the best of my ability, so help me God. You are no longer mere men. You are soldiers. Your uniform marks you as part of the United States government. Your captain's uniform marks him as your superior, even though he once may have been your bootblack. Your duty is to obey orders, whether you think they are right or not. Your officers will do the thinking."

Oglesby proved himself a capable and wise leader of men, and his promotion to higher posts of service was not surprising.

ISAAC C. PUGH

General Isaac C. Pugh had already made a record in war service during two wars, the Black Hawk struggle and the war with Mexico, before the country found itself in the throes of the Civil war. He was ready at the first instant to take up arms, for the third time, for his country.

He was among the first to enlist when recruiting began, and he was made captain of Company A of the Eighth regiment. As soon as the three months enlistment was ended Captain Pugh came home and organized the Forty-first regiment, over which he was appointed colonel. He was conspicuous for his


ISAAC C. PUGH

bravery, and eventually was advanced to the rank of brigadier-general.

GUSTAVUS A. SMITH

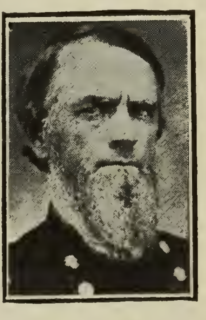
Gustavus A. Smith was operating a buggy factory in Decatur when he was called into his country's service.[1] He at once began to train men, and so successful was he that he was called to Mattoon and Springfield to drill soldiers. On May 6, 1861, he was asked to take command of a regiment, and this regiment for six months was known as Colonel Smith's Independent Regiment. Later it became the Thirty-fifth Illinois Infantry.

GUS A. SMITH

At the battle of Pea Ridge Colonel Smith's horse was shot from under him and he was badly wounded. In September, 1862, President Lincoln commissioned him brigadier-general for his meritorious service. After he recovered somewhat from his wounds he asked to be assigned again to active duty but was refused on account of his condition, and he was given the appointment of provost general marshal for Illinois. These orders later were countermanded by the war department and General Smith was asked to organize a convalescent camp near Murfreesboro. Fifty thousand men were being cared for at this camp at the time it disbanded. In December General Smith was mustered out, but he continued in various military activities until 1866. After the war was over General Smith moved to Tennessee and later to Alabama. He was offered the Republican nomination for congress but declined. However, he served as a member of the state board of education and board of regents, and in 1870 was named United States collection and distribution agent for New Mexico.

JESSE H. MOORE

General Jesse Hines Moore came of a line of fighters, his father, uncles and grandfather having been soldiers in other wars. He entered the Methodist church ministry and became widely known and popular as a preacher and patriotic speaker.



JESSE H. MOORE

As colonel of the One Hundred Fifteenth regiment, Mr. Moore showed tact and courage. At Chickamauga his regiment, after exhausting its ammunition, drove the enemy back by a bayonet charge led by Colonel Moore. To recognize that act of bravery the government placed a monument on Snodgrass hill.

Colonel Moore was given the rank of brigadier-general by President Lincoln in April, 1865.

The men and officers of his regiment presented him a beautiful engraved sword at Resaca, Ga., as a token of their regard. This sword was given, after General Moore's death, to his son, Rear Admiral C. B. T. Moore of the United States navy.

General Moore's service for the country did not end with the war. He served in Congress two terms. In 1873 he was appointed United States pension agent at Springfield and held that office four years. In 1881 he was named United States consul to Callao, Peru. There he fell a victim to yellow fever, and he passed away on July 11, 1883. He was temporarily buried at Callao, but in 1885 the body was brought back to Decatur and buried in Greenwood.

HERMAN LIEB

General Herman Lieb was a resident of Decatur only a few years but during that time made a favorable impression on the community. He was a man of culture and literary tastes, as well as a patriot.

When he came to Decatur in 1856 he took up the study of law. When war broke out he enlisted in the Eighth Illinois regiment. In three months he became a captain, later was appointed major, then a colonel, and in March, 1865, he was made brigadier-general.

His war career was distinguished by his leadership of the colored troops. It took the utmost courage at that time to accept such a charge. Not only was he in great danger from the Confederates, but he was scorned by his fellow soldiers and officials of the Union Army. Yet his colored troops under his leadership performed so valiantly in the war that he won the respect and admiration of all.

When President Lincoln asked for organization of colored troops, there was much prejudice against the idea, but Major Lieb believed the negroes could be made into good soldiers and he resigned his place as major and accepted the colonelcy of a colored regiment. After an attack by 2,500 Texas Rangers and 200 cavalry under the confederate general McCulloch, in which the negroes resisted the charge, there was no question as to whether or not the negroes could fight.

In reporting that battle the confederate general said:

"This charge was resisted with obstinacy by the negro portion of the enemy's forces, while the white portion ran like whipped curs almost as soon as the charge was ordered."

General Lieb was wounded in that battle.

Soon afterwards he reorganized his regiment to go to the defense of Vicksburg, recruiting new men and adding the remnant of the Ninth Louisiana infantry. The new organization was known as the Fifth U. S. Heavy artillery, colored.

After the war was over General Lieb went to Springfield and started a German newspaper. Later he moved to Chicago, and there he died in 1908.

JAMES P. BOYD

Colonel James P. Boyd was one of seven Decatur lawyers who left law practice to go to the front, and he was one of three to give up his life. He enlisted in the One Hundred Sixteenth regiment, and was made lieutenant colonel.

At the battle of Champion Hills he was shot through the lungs. That was in May, 1863. He never recovered from those wounds. In 1864 he went to New Orleans, hoping to improve his health, but he grew worse and returned to Decatur, where he died in October, 1869. He is buried in Greenwood.

THE TUPPERS

Two of Decatur's most honored heroes of the war were the two Tupper brothers, Ansel and Nathan W., both of whom lost their lives, Ansel at the battle of Shiloh, and Nathan at home from disease brought on by exposure. To show their love and esteem for these courageous men, the citizens of Decatur erected a shaft of granite at their graves in Greenwood cemetery.

The Tuppers came to Decatur in 1854 and began the practice of law. Ansel was the first to enlist when war came, and he became lieutenant colonel of the Forty-first regiment.

After Ansel's death on April 6, 1862, his brother Nathan undertook the care of Ansel Tupper's children. But the country was needing more men and Nathan, too, enlisted, and he was made colonel of the One Hundred Sixteenth regiment. He became ill soon after the battle of Lookout mountain, and came home to die, passing away on March 10, 1864.

The two women made widows by the war lived to old age, but they and their children have all passed away, and there is none left to bear the name.

JOHN P. POST

John P. Post, who had recruited the first Decatur company for the war, was a veteran of the Mexican war. On entering the Civil war he was made captain of Company B, but was later advanced to the rank of major, then to lieutenant colonel and to colonel.

At Fort Donelson he was captured, and was confined for some time in Libby prison, getting his release through an exchange of prisoners. He rejoined his regiment, but resigned from the service in December, 1863.

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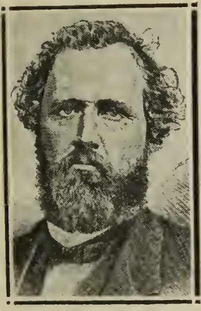
[1] Decatur soldiers in the war while in the south came across many carriages and buggies marked "Gustavus A. Smith, Decatur, Illinois", which had been made in the Decatur factory. Mr. Smith had sold many of the vehicles in the south. In fact he was practically ruined financially by the failure of the southerners to pay for the goods they bought from him.

CHAPTER XLVII

GRAND ARMY OF THE REPUBLIC

AN honor of which all Macon County is proud is that Decatur is the birthplace of the Grand Army of the Republic. That organization, started with twelve members in Decatur, April 6, 1866, and composed of men who had fought for the Union during the War of the Rebellion, spread all over the country. In its banner year, 1890, it had a membership of 409,459, but every year its ranks grow smaller and soon the last member will be gone. It is one organization which cannot recruit new members.


DR. B. F. STEPHENSON

The idea of the Grand Army of the Republic was conceived in the mind of Dr. Benjamin F. Stephenson, surgeon of the Fourteenth Illinois Infantry volunteers, later appointed brigade surgeon and finally made major. He was mustered out of service June 24, 1864, and located in Springfield where he began the practice of medicine.

Dr. Stephenson noticed the neglect of widows and orphans of men who had given up their lives during the war. That neglect brought to his mind the idea of a soldiers mutual benefit society, whose motto should be, "Loyalty, Fraternity and Charity". The name was suggested to him by reading of Napoleon's Grand Army of France.

Robert Mann Woods and Captain John S. Phelps assisted in getting the organization under way. Captain Phelps knew of a printing office in Decatur run by two soldiers, I. N. Coltrin and Joseph Prior, and he came to them to get the ritual printed. So much interest was shown among the soldiers in Decatur that Dr. Stephenson decided to organize the first post here. In a dingy room on the second floor of a building then standing at 253 South Park street twelve men met Friday night, April 6, 1866, and instituted Post No. 1, Grand Army of the Republic, founded on the principles of charity, fraternity and loyalty.

It meant something to become a member of this brotherhood of soldiers of the Union army for the roll of membership was made a roll of honor. Only soldiers who had been honorably discharged from the army were permitted to join.

WHERE G. A. R. WAS ORGANIZED

The twelve members of the original post were:

J. T. Bishop
J. W. Routh
John H. Nale
C. Riebsame
A. Toland
George H. Dunning
Col. Isaac C. Pugh
Joseph M. Prior
I. N. Coltrin
George R. Steele
Dr. B. F. Sibley
M. F. Kanan

The first officers were:

Commander—M. F. Kanan
Adjutant—George R. Steele
Quartermaster—G. H. Dunning
Officer of the day—C. Riebsame
Officer of the Guard—J. T. Bishop
Surgeon—J. W. Routh

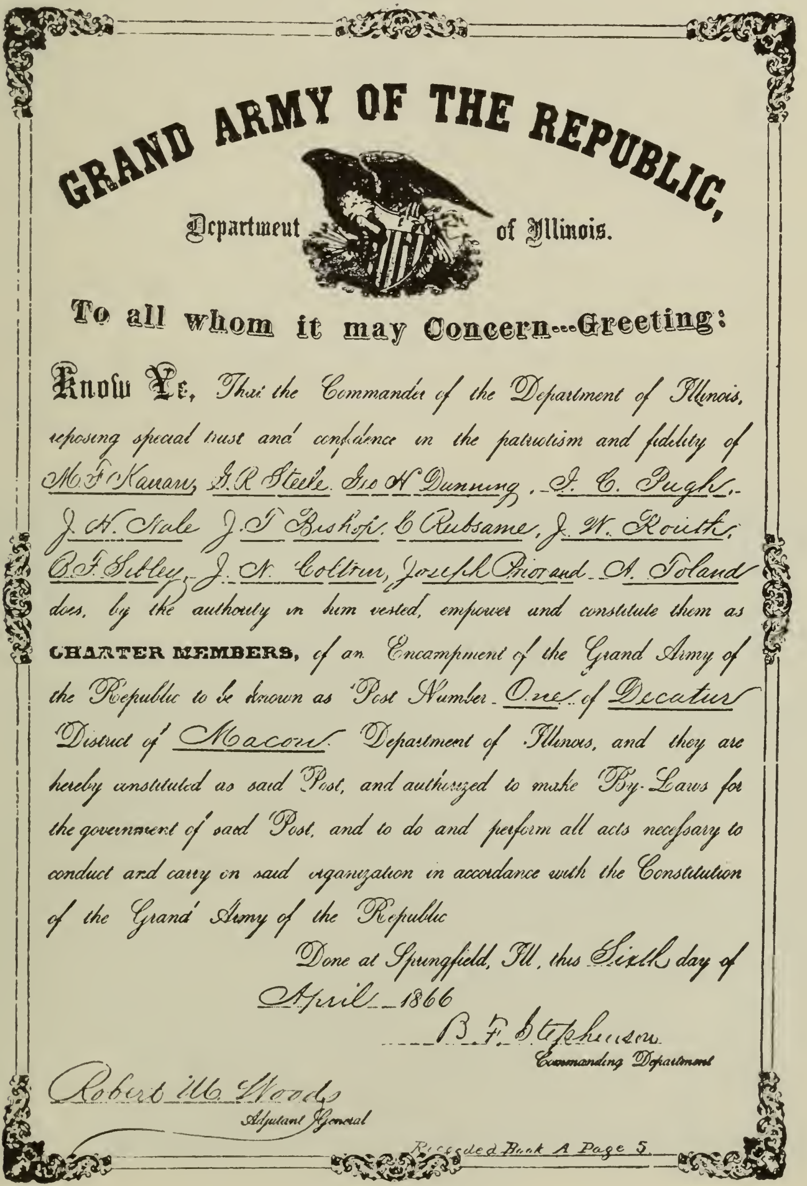
Within two years the membership of the post had reached eighty. Meantime posts had been organized in other cities. Springfield was the next to organize after Decatur. Soon G. A. R. posts were to be found all over the country. Major Stephenson was the first commander-in-chief.

In 1868, however, troubles arose, owing to political dissensions, and every post in Illinois, with the exception of Rockford, disbanded. For ten years no meetings were held, except by the Rockford post. Then reorganization began on a non-partisan basis. Rockford post, having remained in existence, became Post No. 1, and the Decatur post, which was not reorganized until in 1882, became Post 141. It was named Dunham post after Amos Dunham, who at that time was thought to have been the first soldier from this county to give up his life in the war. He was killed at Fort Donelson, Feb. 15, 1862.[1]

In 1891 Old Post No. 1 Society was organized by members of the old post to perpetuate the history of the organization. Captain M. F. Kanan was the last of the Decatur members of that Society. He died in 1909. His death left only one of the charter members of the original post, C. Riebsame, of Bloomington. He, too, now is gone.

The Grand Army gave six presidents to the United States. They were Ulysses S. Grant, Rutherford B. Hayes, James A. Garfield, Chester A. Arthur, Benjamin Harrison and William McKinley.

The Decatur post has enrolled more than 800 members during the years of its existence. The majority of them have been men who went into the war from other states than Illinois. They were men who came to this state, after the war was over, to make their homes.



GRAND ARMY OF THE REPUBLIC,

Department of Illinois.

To all whom it may Concern---Greeting:

Know Ye, That the Commander of the Department of Illinois, reposing special trust and confidence in the patriotism and fidelity of M. F. Kanan, G. R. Steele, Geo. H. Dunning, I. C. Pugh, J. H. Nale, J. T. Bishop, C. Rubsame, J. W. Routh, B. F. Sibley, J. N. Coltrin, Joseph Prior and A. Toland does, by the authority in him vested, empower and constitute them as **CHARTER MEMBERS**, of an Encampment of the Grand Army of the Republic to be known as "Post Number One of Decatur District of Macon Department of Illinois, and they are hereby constituted as said Post, and authorized to make By-Laws for the government of said Post, and to do and perform all acts necessary to conduct and carry on said organization in accordance with the Constitution of the Grand Army of the Republic

Done at Springfield, Ill. this Sixth day of April 1866

B. F. Stephenson
Commanding Department

Robert M. Woods
Adjutant General

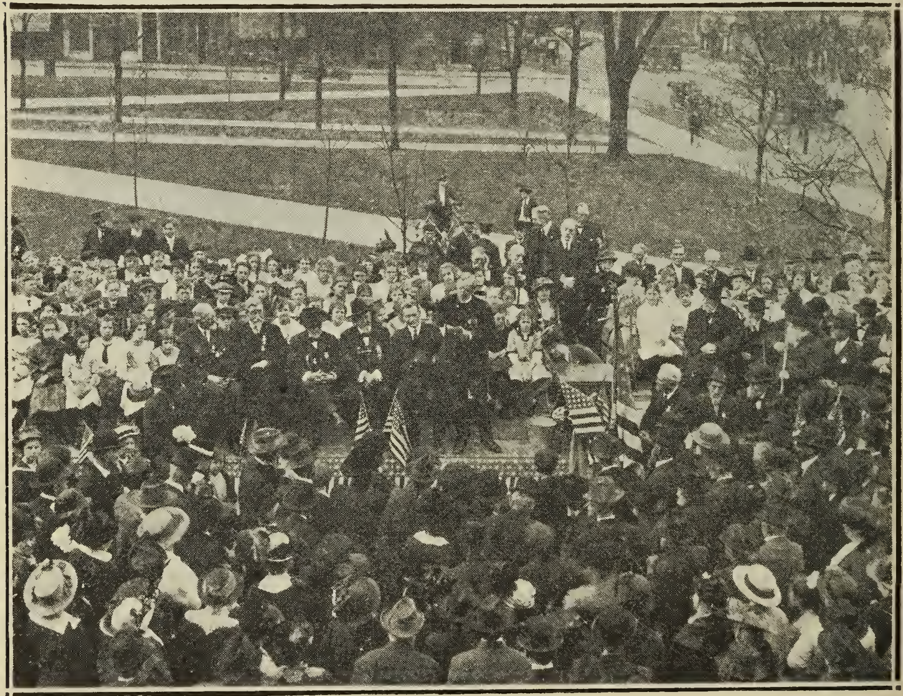
Recorded Book A Page 5.

G. A. R. CHARTER

Then they were young and strong. Now they are old. Their ranks are fast dwindling. Less than fifty remain.

One of the honored members of Old Post 1, and afterwards of Dunham post, was Comrade William F. Martin, who for years was the color bearer. In every parade in which the soldiers took part Comrade Martin always was at the head, carrying the flag. He participated in state and national meetings, as well as local processions. He served for some time as the official color bearer for the Illinois Department, G. A. R. Comrade Martin presented the flag pole, with its concrete base, in Central park, to the city.

The story of Dunham post would not be complete without mention of Dr. W. F. Calhoun, for years the mainstay of the post, its spokesman, adviser, and for fourteen years its commander. Elected to that position in 1915 he remained in it until his death in 1929. He was always looking out for the interests of the post. He was honored not only locally, but also by the state G. A. R., in being elected department commander. Dr. Calhoun's service in the war was in the One Hundred Twenty-third Pennsylvania regiment and Thirtieth Pennsylvania cavalry.



DEDICATION OF G. A. R. TABLET

In Central park stands a monument to the Macon county soldiers of the Civil war. It was erected through the efforts of the Dorcas society, which gave $2,000 toward the fund necessary. The balance, $8,000, came from Macon county, which gave $6,000, and citizens, who subscribed $2,000. The monument was unveiled and dedicated April 6, 1905, the thirty-ninth anniversary of the founding of the G. A. R.

Another monument in honor of the Union veterans stands on a grassy knoll in Fairview park, the gift, in 1927, of the Daughters of Union Veterans. Nearby is the bronze tablet erected in 1926-27 by the county in memory of the Civil war soldiers. It contains the names of 2,085 men from Macon county who fought in the war.

In Greenwood cemetery stands a monument, "To the Unknown Dead", erected by the Woman's Relief Corps.

Various trees in the county have been dedicated to the G. A. R. by schools and other organizations.

To mark the birthplace of the G. A. R. the Illinois department, Woman's Relief Corps, placed a bronze tablet on the building in which the first post was formed. That tablet was unveiled and dedicated April 6, 1915. Several members of Old Post 1 were guests of honor on that occasion. Robert Mann Woods, who had aided in the organization of the Grand Army, gave an address, in which he told of the early days of the Grand army. The dedicatory address was given by Rt. Rev. Samuel Fallows, department commander of the G. A. R.

The tablet was presented by Mrs. Inez J. Bender, department W. R. C. president, and it was unveiled by Ruth Donahue, granddaughter of the first adjutant of the post, George R. Steele.

The building in which the G. A. R. was organized has been replaced with a new structure, the Linxweiler building, on which the memorial tablet is now fixed.

WOMAN'S RELIEF CORPS

Dunham Woman's Relief Corps No. 4, auxiliary to Dunham Post 141, of the Grand Army of the Republic, was instituted Dec. 10, 1883. Its first regular meeting, early in 1884, took place at the home of Mrs. S. T. Trowbridge, whose husband had served as a surgeon through the war.

The Decatur corps was one of the first organized. The corps had been founded in Denver, Colo., July 26, 1883. The first five corps organized in Illinois formed a state body Jan. 31, 1884, at a meeting held in Decatur. The other four, besides Decatur, in the state body were Rockford, Henry, Elgin and Palestine.

The Relief corps has been, from its beginning, a real auxiliary to the comrades. Patriotic work among the schools and churches, charity work, ministering to the comfort of the old soldiers, and various other activities have kept the women busy. Scores of flags unfurled to the breeze by Macon county schools and other institutions were the gifts of the Woman's Relief corps.

One of the Decatur members, Mrs. Inez J. Bender, was chosen in 1920 by the National Woman's Relief Corps as its president.

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[1] Official war records show that at least two other Macon county men died in war service, previous to the time Dunham was killed. Three members of the Dunham family were in the army. Henry enlisted first, and served three months, then returned, and then the father, Dayton Dunham, and brother, Amos, enlisted. Amos was short of stature and was not accepted at first. To make himself taller he inserted heels from a pair of shoes in his boots. He was rejected again, but finally was taken into Captain Lieb's company. At the same time Amos Dunham was being brought home dead, his father was being brought back wounded, the father not knowing of his son's fate until after he reached home.

CHAPTER XLVIII

DECATUR IN THE '60s

THE story of Decatur in the '60s is largely the story of its part in the Civil war and the after effects of that war. It was a trying time for the country in general, yet in spite of the depressing after results of the great conflict the city made some progress.

Decatur had been aroused in 1860 with the big Republican convention held in the Wigwam, where, on May 10, Abraham Lincoln had been proposed and endorsed as a candidate for president of the United States. His nomination at the national convention, his election, and his career as president during the war were followed with the utmost interest.

The news of his assassination stirred Decatur as it had never been stirred before. Decatur had personal memories of its own. It was the saddest of all mornings when the news came that Lincoln was dead.

Decatur did not get that news until the war reports arrived about 10 o'clock the morning after the assassination. John Moreland, court crier, walked the streets proclaiming that sad news had come. Lowber Burrows took the message to the court house in "the Old Square". Judge Emerson adjourned court at once. Mr. Burrows read the message, speaking from the court house window to the crowd assembled below. All Decatur mourned.

After the war was over, Decatur settled down to readjust itself to new conditions and to look ahead to the future.

New citizens came to Decatur at this time. Young men who had fought in the war were now ready to seek a location and settle down. Many chose Decatur. Cupid was a busy fellow, and romances, both new ones and those postponed by the war, culminated in marriages.

Politics were playing a big part in the city then.[1] The G. A. R. had a big influence, and its members could have just about what they wanted in political offices.

R. J. Oglesby was inaugurated governor of Illinois in 1865, and General Jesse H. Moore was sent to congress in 1868. With two citizens in such positions of honor, Decatur was beginning to think it was a place of some consequence.

GAS SERVICE

A public improvement which came in this decade was the installation of gas service. The Gas, Light and Coke company erected a plant at Jackson and Wood streets. Henry Prather became president and J. K. Warren secretary-treasurer of the company. The installation of gas brought forth the following report in a newspaper in 1868: "At last the era of gas has burst upon Decatur with more or less brilliancy. Last night (Nov. 18) stores were lit up by this essential, and light thus diffused held by all as a most important improvement." In a year or two gas lamps and posts were installed in all districts of the city and Decatur was then in reality "lit up".

THIRD METHODIST CHURCH BUILDING

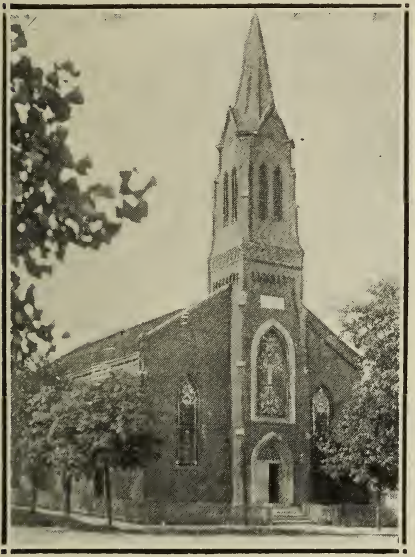
Churches were making progress. The Methodists held a revival meeting which so greatly increased their numbers that it was necessary to build a new church.[2] The revival was held during the winter of 1866-67 by Rev. Levi Pitner, pastor, and in 1868 the church began the erection of a new building at the northwest corner of Water and William streets, which cost $65,000. The building was dedicated Jan. 14, 1872. In December, 1866, the Franklin street church (now Grace Methodist) was organized. Its house of worship, at Eldorado and Franklin, was afterwards called Stapp's chapel.[3]

A second Presbyterian church of the "New School General Assembly" was organized in 1868. It met in Powers hall. Rev. A. L. Brooks became pastor. In 1870, when the old and new branches of the Presbyterian church united, the First and Second churches here combined forces.

St. Patrick's Catholic church erected a building in 1863-64 at the northeast corner of East North and Jackson streets. It was used until the present building was erected in 1910.

The German Lutherans organized a church in 1866, and bought property at Wood and Edward streets, where they soon erected a frame building. Later, in 1880, they built a brick house of worship.

Four new school buildings came during the '60s, the Wood, Sangamon, and Jackson street buildings, and the Decatur high school.



ST. PATRICK'S CHURCH
Erected in 1863-64.

BUSINESS AND INDUSTRIES

James Millikin opened his new bank on Merchant street in 1860.

The Stare Brothers planing mill at Franklin and Cerro Gordo streets was erected in 1860.

An industry which came in 1861 was the Haworth factory, which developed later into one of Decatur's leading establishments.

In 1863 Barnes and Lintner began the manufacture of wood pumps. In 1866 the firm became William Lintner & Co., and began making furniture. Mr. Lintner sold his interest in 1875 to the other partners, Peddecord and Burrows. For years the furniture factory was a prosperous plant, as many as 150 or more persons being employed. The plant suffered a disastrous fire Nov. 19, 1891, and though the factory was rebuilt, the furniture business was continued only a few years afterwards. Later the building was occupied by the Decatur Chair factory, which also suffered a fire (in 1905) and soon went into bankruptcy.

In 1863 Barber and Hawley erected a plant to manufacture gang plows, riding cultivators, headers and other agricultural implements. Many men were employed. It failed, but was reorganized under the name of Decatur Agricultural works, with J. R. Race as president and H. B. Durfee, plant superintendent.

The Union Iron works, at first known as the Central Iron works, had its beginning in 1864, started by Burroughs & Co. James Millikin was a member of the firm from its beginning. It started as a repair shop for machinery and then for manufacturing steam engines and mill machinery. Then John Beall, millwright, invented a machine, the manufacture of which by the Union Iron works has been a leading

Decatur industry ever since. He built a corn sheller, one which would work. It is now used wherever corn is grown. The plant has always been located at Morgan and William streets. A. R. Montgomery entered the employ of the Union Iron works about 1875 as bookkeeper. By 1884 he had risen to the position of secretary-treasurer and general manager, a position he occupied until his death in 1908.

Conrad Ammann began making brick in 1864. So did H. M. Whitmer. William T. Traver that same year began manufacturing tile.

Several marble works were established in 1865. W. H. Grindol began business that year, as did also Peniwell, Brown & Co. In 1867 John Strohm began the same line of business.

Elwood & Co. started making doors, sash, blinds, etc., in 1865. The same year Fred Pahmeyer started a cigar factory. Andrew Kepler began making cigars in 1867.

The Decatur Bottling works was established in 1866 with Fred Kuny as proprietor. D. W. Brenneman started in the liquor business in 1866. That same year H. E. Foster established a lumber business.

In 1867 the linseed oil mill was established at the foot of East Main street by William and Benjamin Sawyer. Later it was run by Hatfield, Taylor & Co. The mill developed rapidly and in a few years was consuming 50,000 bushels of flax seed, doing $75,000 worth of business annually. This business was finally closed about 1900 due to changes in the industry.

R. R. Montgomery established a real estate, insurance and loan business in 1867, and continued in the same office until his death in 1930. For many years the firm was Montgomery & Shull (F. R. Shull), and later Montgomery & Sons, as it is known today. For years that firm was busy platting and selling real estate additions. In later years Mr. Montgomery developed Montgomery Place, one of Decatur's most beautiful residence districts. Mr. Montgomery served as member of the city council, was a member of the library board, and otherwise was active publicly.

In 1868 Young and Norman established a steam laundry and barber shop. Afterwards it became Norman's laundry.

Taylor and Bradley began making carriages, wagons and buggies in 1869. Their factory was at Water and Cerro Gordo streets. This business came in control of the Wayne brothers, John B. and William J., in 1872, and was a well known establishment for a generation.

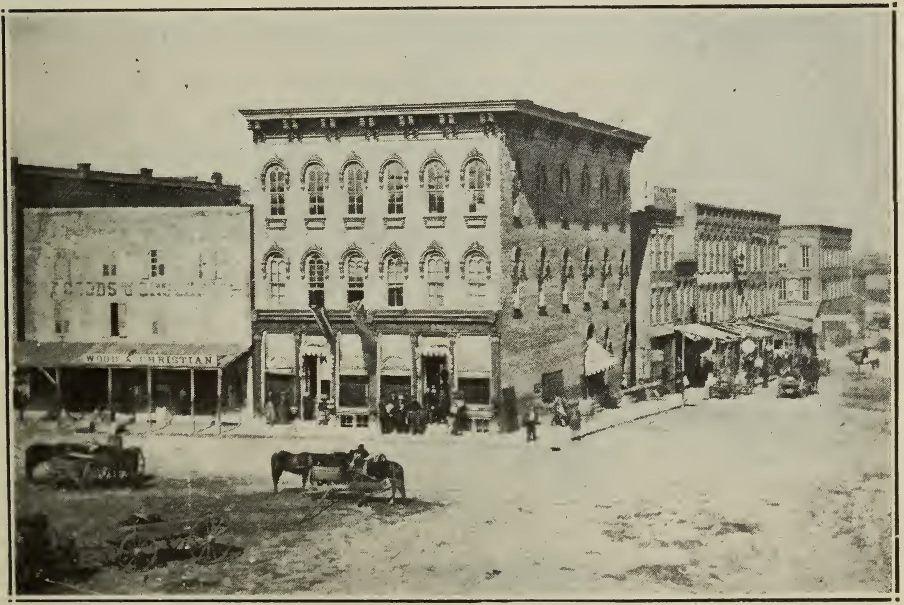
Some stores which were in existence for many years had their beginnings in the '60s, among them B. Stine's clothing store, started in 1866, and Dr. A. J. Stoner's drug store on South Park, opened in

1869. John Washburn, grocer on North Water street, moved to South Park street in 1869, and remained in business there until his death in 1916, his business life here altogether covering sixty-one years.

W. H. Linn and W. R. Scruggs, two Virginians, came to Decatur, and on Oct. 11, 1869, started a dry goods store, which still bears their names. Their first place of business was at 24 Merchant street (Stamper & Condell corner). After ten years there they moved to Main and Water, southeast corner, where the store remained until 1924, when it moved to its present location, Main and Prairie streets.

In 1863 was formed a partnership between John K. Warren and Henry B. Durfee. For years the names of Warren and Durfee were connected with real estate development in Decatur. In 1865 B. K. Durfee became a partner. In 1868 H. B. Durfee retired. In 1893 B. K. Durfee retired, and Mr. Warren continued the business alone until his death in 1914.

Henry B. Durfee first came to Decatur in 1849. During his business career here he served as alderman, was first chairman of the board of supervisors, member of school board for fifteen years, and member of state board of equalization.



STAMPER & CONDELL'S STORE IN THE '60s
Picture taken about 1862. Present site of Bachrach store on Lincoln Square.

John K. Warren located here in 1856, living the first two years on a farm and then moving to Decatur, where he started a real estate and insurance office. He also was interested in manufacturing wheat drills. Later, from 1867 to 1872, he was prominently connected with railroad building, being identified with the Pekin, Lincoln & Decatur, and the Indiana & Illinois roads. He served as president of the latter road from 1868 to 1871.

JOHN K. WARREN

Mr. Warren was president of the Decatur Gas Light and Coke company, was mayor of Decatur in 1867, served for years on the board of education, established the first home savings institution in this section, and was interested in the manufacture of wooden dishes, automatic grain scales and other products. Warren street and Warren school were named for him.

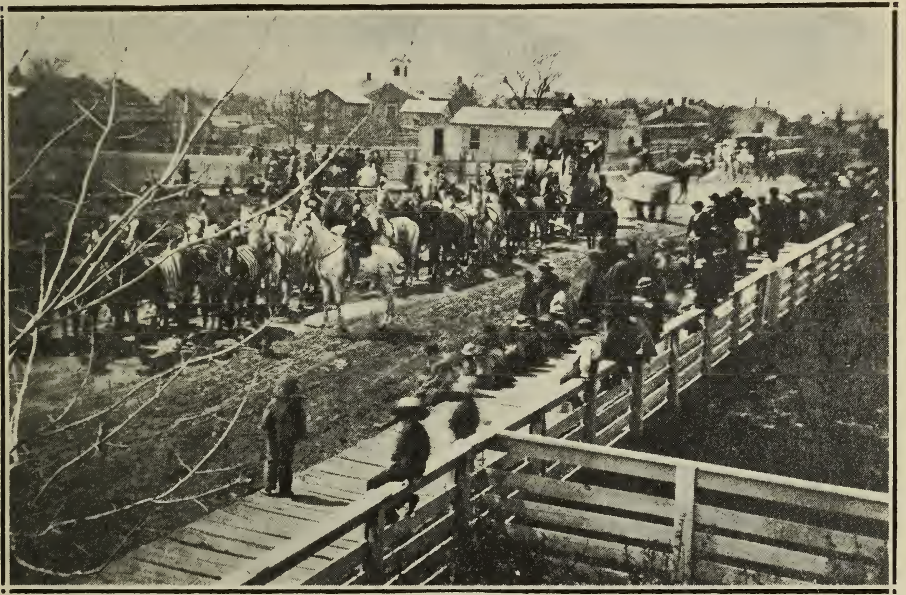
Bradford K. Durfee, who entered the office of Durfee and Warren in 1863, prepared the first set of abstracts for the firm, the first such set to be used in Macon county. Mr. Durfee was instrumental in securing the enactment of the law permitting the establishment of building and loan associations in Illinois. For some time he served as state insurance superintendent. For two years, 1884-86, he was a member of the city council.

George S. Durfee became a clerk for Warren and Durfee, and later he and Charles M. Durfee organized the real estate firm of Durfee Brothers. George S. Durfee also was interested in the manufacture of agricultural implements with W. B. Chambers. Mr. Durfee was a captain in the army during the Civil war. He participated in fourteen battles, and was wounded at Shiloh. He served as parole officer and provost marshal. In 1901 Captain Durfee was appointed by Governor Yates to ascertain and mark the positions occupied by the Illinois troops at the battle of Vicksburg.

SPORTS

Croquet was a great sport in the '60s. Another popular game was cricket. These two pastimes received more attention than baseball. It was reported one time in a newspaper that baseball wasn't half the sensation it once was, and the suggestion was made that a livelier game was needed!

Decatur had its circuses in those days, and they were just as fascinating to the small boy as they are today. The lads who sat on the fence to watch the elephants and camels are old and wrinkled today, but they haven't forgotten the thrills of circus days in their boyhood. College hill was the circus grounds in those days. Circuses traveled altogether by wagon and teams, moving from one stand to another in the night.



CIRCUS SCENE IN 1866
This picture was taken June 27, 1866, by Barnwell and Pitner, photographers.

The first state religious meeting in Decatur was in June, 1867, when the Illinois Sunday School association convention was held on College hill, as College square was then known.

Decatur had no hall big enough to accommodate such a gathering, so a tabernacle—the first of its kind in Decatur—was erected. It was made out of rough lumber, and seats were constructed by placing boards on wood blocks. The ground was covered with straw. The tabernacle was not enclosed at the sides.

This convention meant a great deal to the city. It was largely attended, people coming from all over the state. William Reynolds, the president of the association, was present, as was also B. F. Jacobs, widely

TABERNACLE ON COLLEGE HILL

known Sunday school worker. Philip Phillips, noted singer, was song director. This was at the time when Dwight L. Moody, founder of the Moody Bible Institute of Chicago, was coming into fame as a preacher, and much was heard of him at the convention.

Probably the biggest crowds in Decatur during the '60s were brought by the state fair, which was held at the fair grounds (now Fairview park) in 1863, 1864, 1869 and 1870.[4]

A number of things happened during the '60s to give folks something to talk about. In August, 1863, Macon county's corn crop was ruined by a killing frost, and farmers lost considerably. Previous to that time, the price of corn was 12½ to 15 cents a bushel. By the first of the year the price had gone to $1 and $1.05.

An event of interest in 1869 was the total eclipse of the sun on Aug. 9. For a time Decatur was left in darkness, and the chickens thought it was bedtime and went to roost. Smoked glass was at a premium.

In the spring of 1865 came the excitement of the chase after J. W. Crawford, desperado, ending only when he was shot down. He had tried to sell his horse, and on being suspected of being a horse thief had dropped from the horse and fled. The cry of "horse thief" was raised and everybody joined in the chase. He was brought to bay in a hedge in Union street, north of Green, and as he was about to shoot the marshal, he himself was brought down by a shot fired by John Marsh. He was buried just as he was, his pistol being put in the grave with him, in King's cemetery.

During the '60s, when there was talk of moving the state capital Decatur made strenuous efforts to land the prize.[5] Site for the building and various sums of money were offered, but the effort to bring the capital to the city failed. The site that was offered at that time was Johns hill.

It will be noted that Decatur, as the center of a rich farming community, was becoming the center of industries demanded by any farming community. Implements for cultivating the soil must be had, and enterprising men saw their opportunity to furnish those necessities. Corn growing was given such an impetus by the invention of the check rower that Macon county was even then deserving its title of Corn Belt. While the farmers were making money with their corn and other products, the manufacturers were making money in providing the implements necessary to the farmer. Several factories, important then, but small by today's standards, were at work. Among the articles made were plows, cultivators, corn planters and check rower wire.

The "rich country of the Sangamon" was fulfilling its mission as the land of promise.

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[1] Newspaper editors spoke their feelings freely along political lines and otherwise in those days. Here is the way one editor welcomed a newcomer in the newspaper ranks, according to the Decatur Republican, July 30, 1868:

"The first number of the Decatur Democrat was issued last week. As was to be expected, it was filled with such matters as are calculated to suit the Democratic tastes. J. H. Walin, the editor and manager, was formerly with the Chicago Times and is a good newspaper man. His politics, however, are of the 'pizen' variety. We editorially wish his business all manners of success—may his principles go to Lucifer's domain."

[2] The story is told that one prominent citizen, during the revival of 1866-67, thanked the Lord that "ball rooms are not so well attended as they were." The same good man went on to say: "We adore Thee, O Lord, that a Bible brings a better price than a novel."

[3] The pipe organ installed in this church served three organizations. First was the church, then the Masons, to whom the building was later sold, and last the St. Paul's Lutheran church, to which it was presented by William Frede, who bought the building from the Masons and wrecked it to make room for his new garage in 1930.

[4] Efforts were made to secure the state fair here afterwards but were unsuccessful. In 1883 the supervisors appropriated $5,000 for improving the grounds if the state board of agriculture would locate the fair here for the next two years. However, Decatur's efforts proved unavailing.

[5] A favorite story told on A. Brower Bunn was in connection with this movement. Mr. Bunn, in company with Henry B. Durfee and William E. Nelson, was in Springfield setting forth the claims of Decatur for the capital. Bunn, the spokesman, became more and more enthusiastic and eloquent as he extolled the advantages of this city. Before he was through he had offered not only the site for the new buildings, but a million dollars in cash. The opposing interests asked him who would guarantee that million. With impressive grandeur, Mr. Bunn arose. "Gentlemen," he said, "I will now give you my personal check for it."

At the time his check for $10 might not have been of value.

CHAPTER XLIX

PARKS

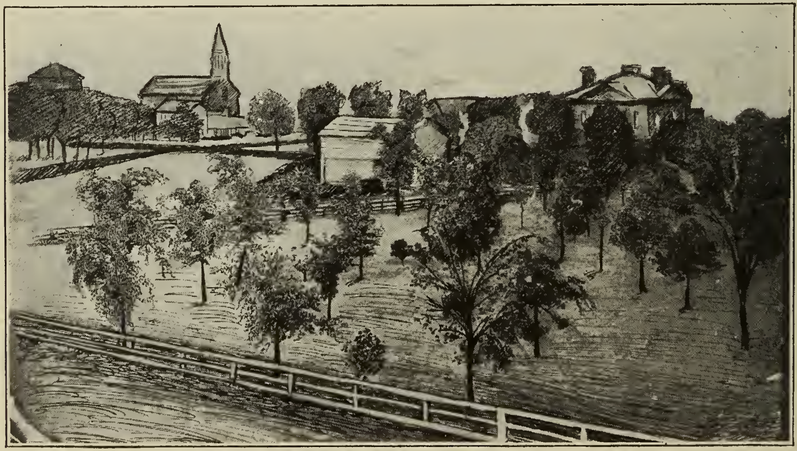
GREEN fields and woodland tracts were too plentiful and too near in the days when Decatur was given its first park for it to be fully appreciated, but seventy-five years later Decatur citizens are glad that it once had a resident so far-sighted and so generous as to make that park possible.

Central park—Decatur's first park—was given to the city July 10, 1855, by Captain David L. Allen and Dr. Thomas H. Read, the donors specifying that it was to be used for no other purpose than a public ground and common park. For twenty years it was nothing more than a public square, surrounded by hitching racks. Once it was rough and hilly, covered with brush and weeds, the "worst place for snakes I ever saw", said one early resident.

Gradually the hollows were filled, as dirt was hauled in from excavations for new buildings in the neighborhood. In 1859 a number of trees were set out.

Now it is a lovely spot of green, with grassy level ground and plenty of shade, a place where people may rest, the kind of a place the donors had in mind many years ago.

The square is a part of what was platted as the "North addition to Decatur" in April, 1837, but it became known as the Allen, McReynolds & Co.'s addition, and that name appears in all realty transac-



CENTRAL PARK IN EARLY DAYS, ABOUT 1865

tions. The addition is bounded by North, Broadway, Wood, and Water streets. Other members of the company which platted it besides David L. Allen, were Dr. Thomas H. Read, brother-in-law to Captain Allen, and James McReynolds.

FOUNTAIN IN CENTRAL PARK
(1877-1930)

When the square was laid out, it was in the mind of Captain Allen to give it to the railroad companies, then being proposed, to be used as a site for a depot. The railroads failed to materialize then, and later the offer to donate it for a park was made. After it came into possession of the city, the city council had the hitching racks built around it for the benefit of the farmers. In those days it was called "the new square."

Real improvement of the park did not begin until June, 1876, when the hitching racks were removed, and gravel walks were laid. Then it was decided to install a fountain. The fountain was purchased that year by Lowber Burrows at the centennial exposition in Philadelphia. On July 2, 1877, after the fountain had been placed and work about the park completed, the council adopted a resolution to name the square Central park, and it was opened "for the enjoyment of the public" July 3, 1877. The fountain stood in the park until 1930 when it was moved to the waterworks grounds to make room for the M. L. Harry memorial.

The first custodian for the park was appointed in 1892. The park commissioners were appointed by the mayor then as follows: J. E. Bering, Peter Loeb, Lowber Burrows.

The so called "pagoda" was built in 1900 for a tool house. It didn't meet with popular favor, being considered a waste of money by many. The soldiers' monument was erected in 1904 at a cost of $10,000.

OTHER PARK SPACES

Decatur had other places which served the purpose of parks in the early days.

Greenwood cemetery, with its pretty natural surroundings, used to draw many visitors in the first few years after it was opened. It was within easy walking distance of the town, was well laid out with walks and drives, and well provided with shade. As an objective point for a Sunday afternoon stroll or drive it grew into popularity, and it was not until other parks had been opened that it began to lose that popularity.

Another place that took the place of a park for a good many years for the north end of town was King's Orchard, in the vicinity of King and Marietta streets.

Nick Webber's beer garden was popular for a number of years—that is, with a certain class of people. During the days of the rolling mill in the '70s, it was frequented by the men from that mill. It was located between Franklin street and the Illinois Central railroad about where Cantrell street would be, if extended west. Being remote from the built up section of the city, there was no one to complain about wild parties, fights and noisy carousals. Those were taken more as a matter of course than they would be now. There was always something doing when excursions were run from Terre Haute, and that city sent over a bunch of pleasure seekers. The beer garden was a side issue of the Webber brewery. It existed for a number of years, but finally was sold.

The tree covered Johns land south of the hill was not a public park, but was used by many as a picnic ground, and many Fourth of July and other gatherings were held there. Because it was so much used by the public so many years, Mrs. Jane M. Johns decided to donate it to the city for a park. Eighteen acres are in the tract donated. It is now known as Johns Hill park.

Bramble's pleasure garden, adjoining the Imboden land, immediately north of Greenwood cemetery, consisted of six and one-half acres, with natural attractions. It was well advertised and patronized during the '70s as a place for outings. Ice cream parlor, bath house, mineral springs, and skating rink were available for the patrons.

Oakland park, now the James Millikin University grounds, was sponsored by the Citizens Street Railway company, which built a horse car line out West Main street to the Wabash tracks. This park was the scene of many temperance and other big meetings in the '80s and '90s.

For twenty years the Decatur Trotting association, organized in 1890, maintained a park for annual race meets on the Brenneman land at the present intersection of Broadway and Garfield avenue. These meets brought huge crowds of racing enthusiasts and noted horsemen. George A. Keller was one of the secretaries that did much to make the meets successful.

In 1890 fifty acres of the Maffit and Starr & Mills land along the Sangamon was set aside as a park, known as Riverside park, which was leased by the Decatur Electric Railway company. A car line was run to the entrance, where the corner of Silas street and Riverside avenue is now. It was extremely popular for a number of years, having much natural attractiveness, as well as entertainment facilities.

Boating, bathing, picnics, water carnivals, chautauquas, skating, natatorium, were among the attractions. The Riverside Boat company had fifty boats on the river, and there were other privately owned boats, including three steamboats. Often excursions were run to this Decatur park from other cities.

FAIRVIEW

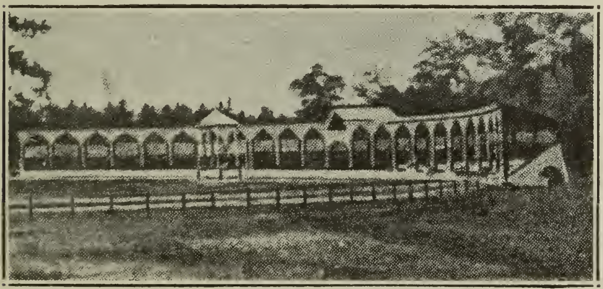
The original forty acres of what is now Fairview park were laid out in 1857 as a fairground for the Macon County Agricultural society. Deeds transferring the land were not made out until 1863. The deed for the east twenty acres was dated March 26, 1863, and was given by the executors of the estate of William L. Powers. The consideration was $600. The deed for the west twenty acres was given May 2, 1863, by Christian J. Barrackman, consideration being $150.

A tight board fence was erected around the entire forty acres. The land then was all in timber, and enough ground was cleared to make room for buildings. The buildings erected included an ampitheater with 5,000 seating capacity, farm products hall, 40 by 100 feet, mechanical and industrial hall 40 by 60 feet, fine arts hall in octagonal shape, 40 feet in diameter, stalls for 500 cattle and pens for 500 hogs.

Good water supply was furnished by six springs on the grounds.

The Macon County Agricultural society was organized June 28, 1856, with E. A. Jones as president; William Rea, vice president; William Martin, treasurer; James P. Boyd, secretary; and Samuel Powers, Jacob Hostetler, J. G. Taylor and D. K. Wilson as directors.

The first fair was held Oct. 9-10, 1856, and from that time until 1884, county fairs were held each year, with the exception of 1863, 1864, 1869 and 1870, when Illinois state fairs were held on the grounds.[1]



AMPHITHEATER IN OLD FAIR GROUNDS

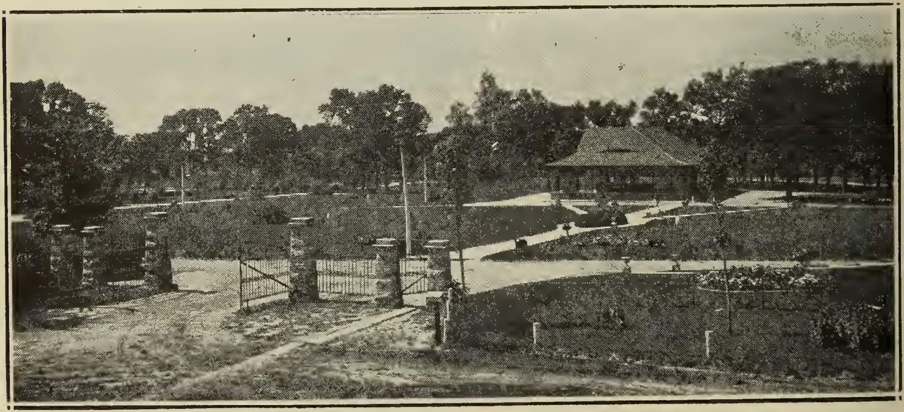
In 1869 the society sold the grounds to Macon county for $6,500. The deed was signed by James H. Pickrell, president, and James C. Lake, secretary.

Mayor M. F. Kanan suggested in 1890 that the county lease the grounds to the city of Decatur for a park. He aroused sentiment in favor of the idea, and the matter also was agitated by The Review. On March 27, that year, a lease was signed. The city took possession April 1. Terms agreed on were $100 a year for the first ten years, $200 a year for the second ten, and $250 a year for the third ten.

A voting contest to name the park was inaugurated by The Review, and 135 names were submitted. Fairview, with 3,224 votes, and Columbia, with 3,084, were the two most popular names.[2]

Within the next few years after the city took possession of the park, considerable improvement was made. The pavilion and custodian's home were erected. Drainage, water, drives, were provided. In 1900 W. C. Hood, landscape gardener, was employed to lay out and beautify the grounds. From $2,000 to $3,000 a year was being spent on improvements. This was the first work of Frank D. Torrence, who became superintendent July 12, 1901, serving until his death, Jan. 13, 1928. His career was remarkable for the generous and whole hearted way he gave his whole life to the city's service.

In 1903 the city purchased the land from the county, paying $8,000 for the forty acres. In 1905 the ten acres to the east, known as the Catto tract, were added, the purchase price being $7,000. The addition to the west, formerly the Dreamland amusement park, a tract of ten acres, was bought in 1919. Another tract to the west was bought from



ENTRANCE TO FAIRVIEW PARK, 1908

the I. P. and L., and thirty-eight acres along Stevens creek were added in 1928, being bought from the Taggert heirs, at $250 an acre.

These various additions brought the acreage of Fairview park up to a total of 121.25.

SCENE IN FAIRVIEW
In the days when signs read "Hitch Here" instead of "Park Here".

The Dreamland amusement park was established in 1905 by the Decatur Amusement company, and Fred Given was named manager. A score of citizens subscribed the $40,000 invested. Ten acres were bought from E. S. Baker. A theater, dance pavilion, roller coaster, etc., were built

For seven years the park was operated, but it was not a success financially. In 1919 the city bought the land and added it to Fairview.

DREAMLAND PARK SCENE

OTHER PARKS

Lincoln park was purchased by the city in 1905. The gift of two additional small tracts, one by B. B. Tuttle and the other by Mrs. Caroline Powers, gave the park a total acreage of twenty-two.

In February, 1911, the city purchased fourteen acres in the northeast section of the city for a park, and it was named Torrence park in honor of Park Superintendent Frank Torrence. The name was chosen by popular vote. Five acres were added in 1924.

Garfield park, two acres, in East Main street, was donated to the city by J. M. Clokey in 1892, when he laid out East Park Boulevards addition, but was not developed until in 1912.

Nelson park came into possession of the city in 1912. The original tract, 83 acres, was not bought outright at first. J. S. Baldwin, then city attorney, submitted a proposition that the land be leased from its owner, E. Wayne Ponting, at $2,000 a year for ten years, with option of buying at any time within the ten years for $20,000, the rental previously paid to be applied on the purchase price. The proposition was accepted by the council. After five years the land was bought. This park, like others, was named by a voting contest in The Review, the public choosing in that way to honor Judge William E. Nelson.

Creation of the Decatur park district was brought about by the offer April 27, 1924, of Mrs. L. P. Walbridge and Mrs. E. P. Irving to donate Faries park to the city, in accordance with the wishes of their father, Robert Faries. The condition was made that a park district be

NELSON PARK BEACH

organized to take over management of that property as well as all city parks.

An election was held on Aug. 5, 1924, to vote on establishing a park district, boundaries of which would coincide with the boundaries of Decatur township. The proposition carried by a vote of 4,061 to 321. The park commisioners named at that election were: George A. Caldwell, James H. Galloway, George F. Hess, Howard C. Schaub and W. Elmer White. When Mr. White left the city, John McEvoy was selected to succeed him. The board elected Mr. Schaub as president.

At the time the park district was created the city owned 210 acres of park land. At the present time (1930) the park board controls more than 800 acres. A summary of the acreage, cost, and estimated value of the parks is given here:

Park—	Acreage	Cost or Estimated Value
Nelson	187.49	$197,813.23
Lake shore land	72.11	6,107.61
Big Creek land	152.59	18,617.81
Fairview	122.39	60,120.00
Faries	158.60	88,780.00
Torrence	18.91	22,600.00
Johns hill	18.00	63,000.00
North side	20.26	24,319.08
South side	39.11	56,702.64
Lincoln	25.21	79,500.00
Garfield	2.80	11,200.00
Jasper playground	1.00	3,650.00
Totals	818.47	$632,410.37

The 72.11 acres of land designated as lake shore land were bought from the Decatur Water Supply company.

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[1] One of the features of the 1858 fair, as reported by the secretary, James Shoaff, was the horseback riding by thirteen members of the fair sex, "all of whom rode gracefully, with much ease, and creditably to themselves."

[2] The name, Fairview, was suggested by Mrs. Helen W. Martin, wife of E. J. Martin, then manager of the "Short Line railway", as the Decatur electric was known. The name was a combination, as one may see.

CHAPTER L

DECATUR PUBLIC LIBRARY

ONE bleak November day, in the year 1867, a little group of women sat talking in the home of Mrs. A. T. Hill. They were women who realized the worth of books and they wanted to devise a plan whereby a library, open to everyone in Decatur, could be provided. They felt that Decatur needed such an institution. That was the real beginning of the splendid public library which Decatur has today.

In that group of women were: Mrs. J. J. Jones, Mrs. R. Gallagher, Mrs. M. E. Jones, Mrs. E. J. Evans, Mrs. G. E. Morehouse, Mrs. H. C. Johns and Mrs. W. T. Wells. They decided to call a meeting of citizens at the Baptist church on Tuesday, Dec. 3, to establish a Ladies Library association. It is interesting to note that the women at this first meeting pledged themselves "to work faithfully and not relax their efforts until a public library was founded in the city".

At the Dec. 3 meeting membership fees were set and committees appointed. The women met again Dec. 9 and adopted a constitution. At their Dec. 13 meeting they adopted by-laws, and elected officers as follows:

President—Mrs. A. A. Powers
Vice President—Miss Mary Baker
Secretary—Mrs. M. E. Jones
Treasurer—Mrs. A. T. Hill
Board of directors—Mrs. Lamira Wilkinson, Mrs. M. K. Hatch, Mrs. S. F. Greer, Mrs. J. J. Jones, Mrs. H. C Johns, Mrs. A. J. Gallagher, Miss Alice Shellabarger.

Rooms for the library were secured on the second floor of the building at Main and Water streets. E. O. Smith donated five settees, two of which were cushioned at the expense of Mrs. Wilkinson. Several friends gave books. With books that were purchased, the shelves began filling up.

The library was open at first on Mondays, Wednesdays and Saturdays. On Jan. 22, 1868, Miss Sallie Taylor was appointed librarian. At her request Miss Mollie Thatcher was named assistant.

The women began to get busy at once to raise money for the library. A series of four presentations of a musical and dramatic entertainment brought in $237.35. A Thanksgiving festival netted $114.85.

MRS. A. A. POWERS

When the first annual meeting was held Dec. 14, 1868, at Powers hall, it was reported the association had about 1,000 volumes in the library, and during the ten months previous the book circulation had been 4,386. There were 239 life members, and 278 annual members. The treasurer reported receipts of $2,084.35 and expenditures of $2,012.69.

In 1869 Miss Josephine Stamper was appointed librarian, Miss Taylor having resigned. Miss Ada Powers was named assistant.

By 1873 the women began to urge that the city council take over the library under the new library law which had been passed in 1872 permitting levy of tax for library purposes.

On July 21, 1874, it was decided to move the library to the new Schroeder building on East Prairie street.

About this time there was considerable agitation in Decatur against the saloons and some of the citizens were urging the establishment of a reading room as a counter attraction. This was finally accomplished in October, 1874, when the Reading Room association was organized with officers as follows:

President—E. A. Gastman
Vice President—Rev. Robert McKenzie
Secretary—R. P. Lytle
Treasurer—B. K. Durfee
Directors—Mary Ennis, W. J. Quinlan, W. A. Barnes, Mrs. A. T. Hill, Mrs. A. J. Gallagher, Mrs. R. L. Walston, and Mrs. H. C. Johns.

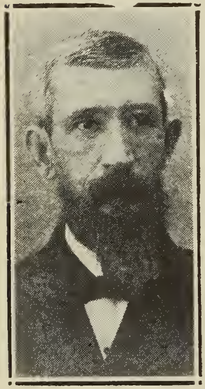
This association made arrangements to rent the room back of the library room and Miss Caroline Allen was appointed custodian of the reading room at a salary of $1 a day. H. C. Lintner donated some furniture, and Mrs. H. C. Johns and Mrs. R. L. Walston raised a fund of $720 for reading matter, and other expenses.

It was being felt more and more that the city council should take over both the library and reading room, and finally a petition to that effect from the Ladies Library association, the Reading Room association and various other citizens as well was presented to the council. That was in June. The petition was presented by W. J. Quinlan.

At the council meeting Aug. 3, 1875, vote was taken on the proposition, and it resulted in a tie. Mayor R. H. Meriweather cast the deciding vote in favor of the library, and a week later, on Aug. 10, 1875, the Decatur public library was organized.[1]

During all the years of the existence of the Ladies Library association Mrs. A. A. Powers was its president, except in the last six months when she was in San Jose, Cal., with her daughter, Mrs. J. K. Warren. Mrs. W. W. Dewolf was the president the last six months.

The first library board, after the city council took over the library, was composed of Joseph Mills, president; J. L. Peake, William A. Barnes, Mrs. C. A. Ewing, Mrs. S. F. Greer, Mrs. B. F. Sibley, W. H. Ennis, W. W. Foster, W. L. Hammer.



RICHARD L. EVANS

Richard L. Evans, first librarian, named in 1875, held that position until the time of his death, in November, 1881, when he was succeeded by his widow, Mrs. Alice G. Evans.

When the first annual report was submitted, May 1, 1876, it showed that the library contained 1,619 books. In the year there had been 40,138 visitors.

When the library first came into possession of the city it occupied two rooms on the second floor in the Schroeder building on East Prairie street. These rooms were occupied until Oct. 5, 1881, when the library was moved to the second floor of the old Powers building on South Water street. In 1889 another move was made, this time to the Roberts and Greene building at Main and William streets. There it remained until the building was destroyed by fire, Feb. 2, 1892. Furniture, fixtures and 4,300 books of the library were lost in that fire.

Temporary quarters for the library were secured in the old Presbyterian church building on West Prairie, which had just been vacated, and there it stayed until the Roberts and Greene building was rebuilt. The move back to that building was made in the fall of that year, and there the library remained until 1897 when it was moved to the fifth floor of the Powers building. That was the last move made by the library until it entered its own building in 1903.

One item of early library history which should be remembered is the public fund which was raised to purchase books shortly after the city had taken over the library. Two women, Mrs. H. C. Johns and Mrs. R. L. Walston, solicited subscriptions until they had raised $3,000. L. L. Haworth was the first subscriber, giving $100, and other business men gave like amounts.

NEW BUILDING

Andrew Carnegie was giving away funds for library buildings in 1900. C. M. Hurst, who knew his private secretary, suggested an application for Decatur. Mayor George A. Stadler, Charles M. Hurst and Mrs. Alice G. Evans, librarian, left Decatur Jan. 26, 1901, for New York to interview Mr. Carnegie. They did not see him, but were told to submit their request in writing. Mayor Stadler, within five days after returning home, received a letter from Mr. Carnegie's secretary saying that Mr. Carnegie would give $60,000. The letter follows:

"Andrew Carnegie, New York,
"5 West 51st street. 6th February, 1901.

"Mayor G. A. Stadler,
"Decatur, Ill.

"Dear Sir—Mr. Carnegie desires me to say that if the city of Decatur will provide a suitable site and agree to spend not less than $6,000 per year upon the maintenance of the library he will give $60,000 for the building.

"Respectfully yours,

"JAMES BUTRAM,
"Private Secretary."

The lot at the southwest corner of Main and Eldorado streets was selected as a site for the building. It was bought from the heirs of Mrs. A. A. Powers for $15,000. While it was felt that this was a suitable location for a library, citizens did not lose sight of the significant fact that this corner was for many years the home of Mrs. Powers, who had been president for six years of the Ladies' Library association.

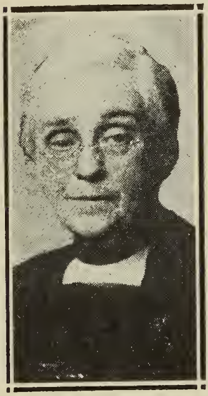
The lot was bought in May, 1901. Mauran, Russell and Garden, architects of St. Louis, were engaged to draw plans for the building, and contract was let on Jan. 30, 1902, for the construction work, to V. Jobst and Sons of Peoria. July 1, 1903, saw the library established in its new home.

At the time the building project was first started the library board consisted of W. J. Quinlan, E. P. Vail, O. B. Gorin, W. J. Wayne, R. R. Montgomery, H. C. Schaub, Mrs. I. N. Barnes, Mrs. B. O. McReynolds, Miss Nettie Lindsay.

Mr. Quinlan, who had been one of the most active promoters of a library in Decatur since its inception, served on the library board for twenty-one years, from 1884 to 1905. From 1897 to 1905 he was president of the board.

PUBLIC LIBRARY

In 1908 the library began its extension work by establishing a branch library at H. B. Durfee school. This eventually resulted in the erection of the Branch library building on North Jasper street, named the Alice G. Evans branch. It was dedicated in July, 1922. Since then various branches in schools and factories have been established.



MRS. ALICE G. EVANS

One valuable possession of the library is the collection of Lincolnia, donated in 1921 by Miss Jane Hamand. This includes the Kirkham grammar from which Abraham Lincoln and Ann Rutledge studied.

Few people in Decatur have given to any institution the service which Mrs. Alice G. Evans gave to the public library. From its very beginning, when her husband was librarian, until her death, on Feb. 9, 1926, she had been connected with it, first as assistant to her husband, then as librarian herself. Her progressive spirit kept the library in advance in making improvements and taking up new methods that increased the service to the public.

At the time she celebrated the fiftieth anniversary of her connection with the library, on Aug. 10, 1925, she was presented a year's leave of absence by the board. It was also the golden jubilee of the library. Mrs. Evans was the central figure in that celebration, and was presented with a purse of gold.

Following the death of Mrs. Evans, which occurred Feb. 9, 1926, Miss Minnie Dill was appointed librarian and has since held that position.

The annual report of the year 1929 showed that the total circulation of books was 314,926. The total number of borrowers was 17,925, and the number of books in the library was 62,139.

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[1] The mayor was absent when that meeting convened. His vote was necessary to break the tie on the board. It was a rainy night, but Mrs. Jane M. Johns, undaunted, got into her buggy, drove through the rain and mud to the mayor's home, and persuaded him to come back with her to the council meeting. So the deciding vote was cast which gave Decatur its library.

CHAPTER LI

DECATUR IN THE '70s

DECATUR saw the beginning of its public improvement era in the '70s. There was not as much increase in population as might have been expected although the city had a steady growth, yet this decade saw the addition of many business enterprises, as well as the improvements of a public nature.

Waterworks and fire department, street car service, new railroads, public library, hospital, coal mining, and telephone service were among the necessities and conveniences which had their start.

The first train to cross the Wabash bridge over the Sangamon south of town was a work train which made the crossing on Jan. 13, 1870. The first passenger service on the Decatur-East St. Louis railroad (now the St. Louis branch of the Wabash) was given June 7, 1870. The train left at 7:25 a. m. with sixteen people aboard. Most of them made the trip merely for the ride. It was announced that passenger service would be given on alternate days, the train leaving at 7:25 a. m.

The last rail on the Pekin, Lincoln & Decatur road was laid Oct. 10, 1871, but it caused no comment. There was too much excitement just then over the big fire in Chicago. Mrs. O'Leary's cow had started something, and the Chicago catastrophe was more interesting than new railroads. The president and directors of the T. W. & W. road, which had leased the new P. L. & D. railroad, made the trip over the line from Pekin to Decatur. They found it rough in spots but promised good service in a few weeks.

Decatur did its part, by the way, in aiding the sufferers from the great disaster in Chicago. Our citizens contributed 1,436 loaves of bread and $185.50 worth of bacon.

The Illinois Midland, the railroad from Peoria to Terre Haute, was another road completed in the '70s. Also the Indianapolis, Decatur & Springfield line was completed as far as Montezuma, Ind., and the Decatur, Monticello & Champaign line was constructed.

The summer of 1871 will be remembered by older residents of the city as the summer of the great drouth.[1] Temperature, during the month of August especially, rarely fell below 90 and much of the time was around 100. Springs and wells failed. The Sangamon became a series of water holes. Many cattle died. It was necessary to drive cattle long distances to find water. Pastures dried up. Great losses were suffered by the farmers.

The drouth was felt all over the state.

That was the year of the Revere hotel fire, which had such an effect on the business section of Decatur.

The Daily Republican, a leading newspaper in Decatur for years, was started April 1, 1872, with B. K. Hamsher and J. R. Mosser as publishers.[2] The Decatur Local Review, a new weekly paper published by A. Wuench, made its first appearance March 4, 1873. It was the beginning of the present day Review.

In November, 1870, Macon county's new court room in the Powers building was formally opened. The old brick court house was sold to Martin Forstmeyer for $385. It was torn down during the winter of 1870.

In 1870 came the Rolling mill. In that year the waterworks plant was built. The fire department was organized in 1872. The county farm was established and the main building erected in 1873. This building burned in 1882, several inmates losing their lives.

In 1876 the first street car service was started.

Smith's Opera house was formally opened to the public in September, 1870. People were delighted with it. The motto of the stage was, "Dedicated to Free Speech". Katie Putnam was the leading lady in the play, "Frou Frou", which was the attraction on the opening night.

The Decatur public library was organized in 1875. St. Mary's hospital was started in 1878 in a frame house, and the next year a brick building was erected. In 1877 the Y. M. C A. was organized.

This was the period when the Haworth check rower factory was building up fortunes for its owners. The check rower was the invention of George D. Haworth in 1869, and that fall he formed a partnership with his father, Mahlon, and brothers, L. L. and J. W. Haworth for its manufacture.

ST. MARY'S HOSPITAL—FIRST BUILDING

Mr. Haworth had previously invented corn planters and had manufactured them in Mechanicsburg. He moved his business to Decatur in 1861.

Demand for the check rower increased every year until it became so great it was impossible to keep the orders filled. When the business was at its height more than 16,000 were made in a year.

For a number of years the Haworth factory was the leading manufacturing business of Decatur and the Haworth homes were the centers for social and literary groups. G. D. Haworth lived on East Eldorado street, the house now St. Patrick's rectory. J. W. Haworth's home was on North Jackson at Eldorado and L. L. Haworth's home was at Edward and William streets.

The factory continued making money until the patents expired and corn planter manufacturers began making their own check rowers.

Several churches were erected in the '70s. The United Brethren church built a house of worship at the corner of Broadway and Eldorado.

The Christian church tore down its building at Main and North streets and erected a new one on the site under the leadership of Rev. N. S. Haynes. This building was moved in 1893 to Edward and William streets. The accompanying picture was taken after it was removed to the new site.

The Baptist church bought the lot at the southeast corner of Water and North streets and put up a building costing about $12,000. It was dedicated April 23, 1876.

EDWARD ST. CHRISTIAN CHURCH
—Photo by J. E. Bering.

German Catholics in 1877 organized a church, which was named St. James' church. Later a house of worship and school were erected on East Clay street.

Ursuline Sisters came from Alton and in 1873 opened St. Teresa's academy.

Boring for coal started in 1874 by the Western Coal company on a plot of ground north of the Wabash round house.[3] The effort was abandoned when a depth of 50 feet had been reached without results. Decatur citizens however, believed there was coal here, and they subscribed $5,000 for the purpose of making a thorough test. J. E. Bering bored the second hole, but it had to be abandoned on account of quicksand. Another attempt was made by Mr. Bering and at a depth of 290 feet a stratum of the black diamonds was discovered. Specimens were placed on exhibit at the Peddecord and Burrows bank on Jan. 14, 1876. Two or three years afterwards a coal shaft was sunk, and later two other shafts were sunk in Decatur.

In 1879 the waterworks dam was completed. That same year Decatur had its first telephone service.

In 1878 the Decatur Tank Line company was organized, and it served a large territory. It was a branch of the Standard Oil company of Cleveland.

In 1871 Adam Blenz and G. J. Danzeizen started a meat market. It led to the establishment later of the Danzeizen Packing house.

S. M. Irwin came to Decatur in January, 1877, and purchased a stock of drugs that occupied the building at 100 East Prairie. His drug store is across the street now.

Among the industries established in the '70s was the plant of Lyon, Gipson & Co., which is still in business today as the Lyon Lumber company.

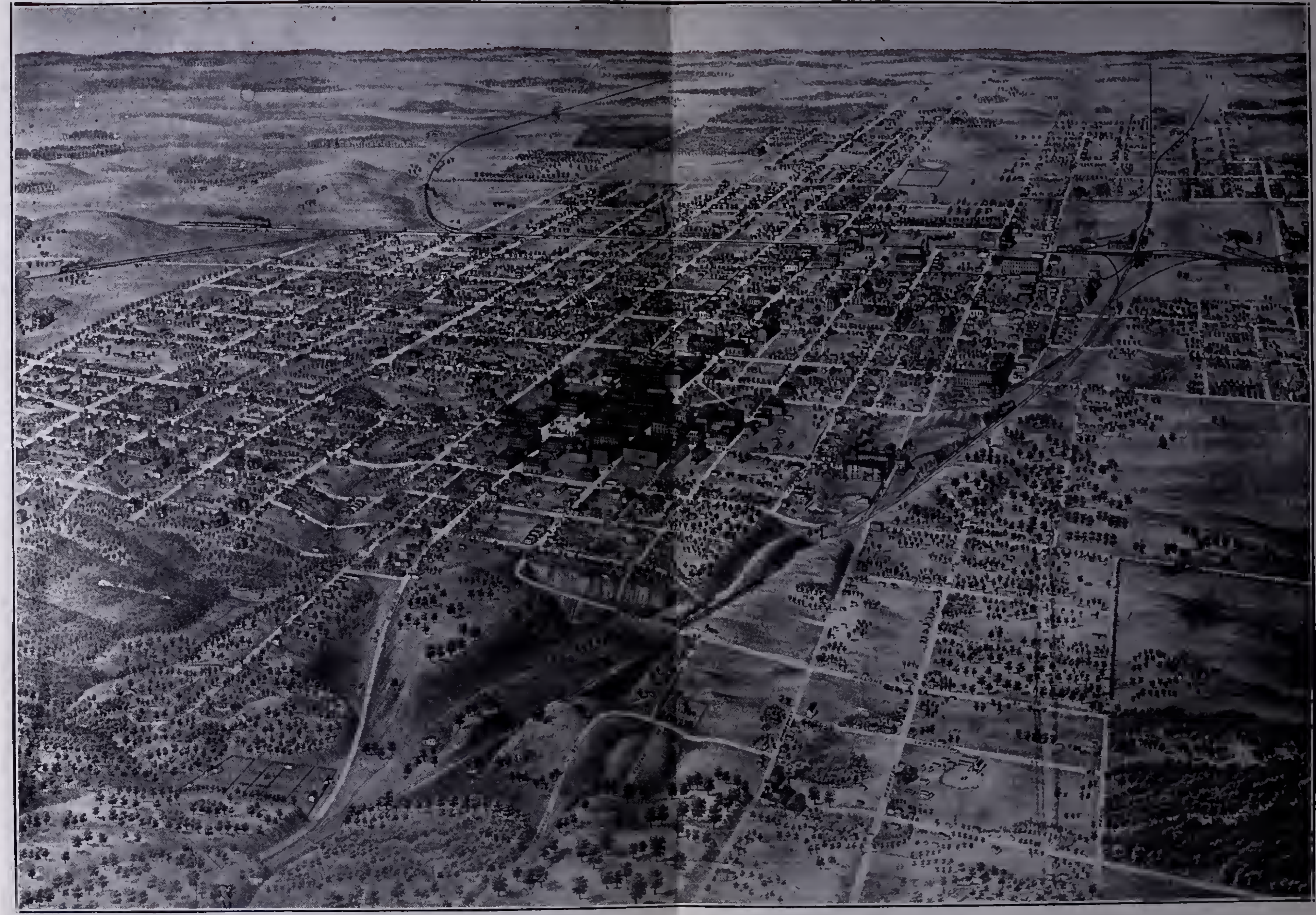
The Chambers, Bering and Quinlan company was formed in 1875 by W. B. Chambers, W. J. Quinlan and J. E. Bering, to manufacture the Champion and Brown hog ringers, Barnes wire check rowers, and other articles. The company bought the Decatur Agricultural works plant.

Charles M. Caldwell started a livery business in 1871 which he continued until 1919. Most of that time it was located in the 100 block West Main street. In the halcyon days of the livery business Mr. Caldwell always kept as many as 50 rigs busy. Caldwell's barn was known for many miles around.

CALDWELL'S LIVERY STABLE

Many of the buildings in the picture were marked in the original drawing by numbers. Some of them are not now discernible; others may be seen with the aid of a magnifying glass. The numbers showed the following places:

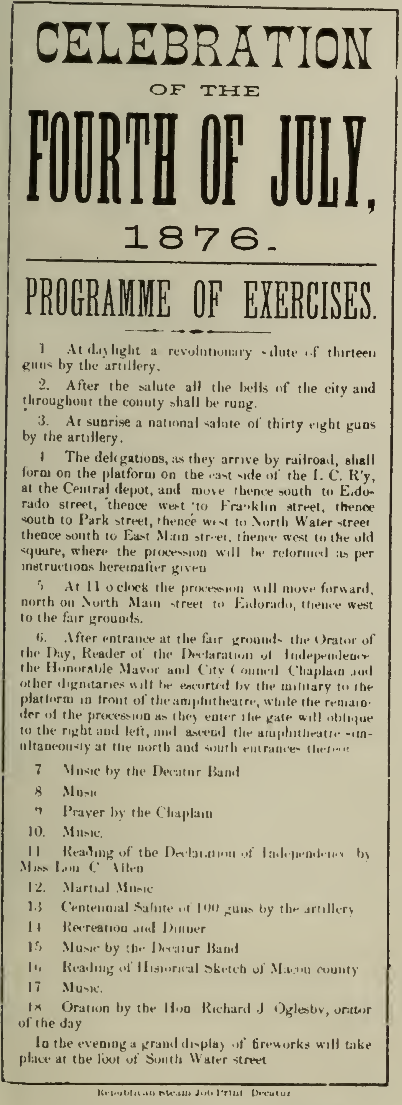
1—First M. E. church.
2—Stapp's Chapel.
3—St. Patrick's Catholic church.
4—High school.
5—United Brethren church.
6—First Baptist church.
7—Presbyterian church.
8—Janes Chapel.
9—Christian church.
10—German Methodist church.
11—Episcopal church.
12—Rolling Mill Chapel.
13—Bethel church.
14—German Catholic church.
15—African M. E. church.
16—African Baptist church.
17—First Ward school house.
18—Second Ward school house.
19—Third Ward school house.
20—Fourth ward school house.
21—Lutheran church.
22—Priest house.
23—St. Nicholas hotel.
24—Hose House No. 1.
25—Hose House No. 2.
26—Hose House No. 3.
27—Wayne Bros. Carriage Works.
28—Shellabarger's Mills.
29—Bagging Factory, Conklin Bros.
30—Coal Oil Works.
31—Haworth & Sons Check Row Manufactory.
32—P. Loeb's Gray Iron Foundry.
33—Woolen mills.
34—Furniture factory.
35—Union Iron Works.
36—Coffin factory.
37—Elwood Bros. Planing Mill.
38—Decatur Linseed Oil mills.
39—Priest & Co. Illinois Central mills.
40—Midland depot.
41—Union depot.
42—Wabash shops.
43—Decatur Agricultural works.
44—College square.
45—Old Square.
46—City Park.
47—Whitmer's Brick and Tile yard.
48—Harpstrite & Shlaudeman, brewery.
49—Wabash junction.
50—Fair Grounds.
51—Greenwood cemetery.
52—Slaughter house.
53—Postoffice.
54—Court House block.
55—Hill & Co. Hog Ringing Manufactory.
56—Kramer's Carriage works.
57—St. Claire mills.
58—James A. Millry Illinois Central paper warehouse.
59—Fr. Kuny's Steam Bottling works.
60—Gas works.
61—E. B. Pratt's grocery.
62—Globe saloon.
63—Washington Garden.
64—Grabs and Gury Concert hall.
65—St. Nick Livery and Bus line.
66—Starr & Sons Harness and Saddle shop.
67—Dennis and Rea, hardware.
68—Challes Bros. Boot and Shoe store.
69—Rufus & Crocker Hardware store.
70—John Thomas Boarding house.
71—Cheap Charley's Clothing house.
72—D. W. Brenneman wholesale liquor house.
73—J. T. Shea grocer.
74—J. A. Barney Cigar Store.
75—Hubbard & Swerenger Drugs and Books.
76—Jacob Danzeizen Butcher shop.
77—Julius Wickmann Gun shop.
78—John Franks Boot and Shoe shop.
79—J. F. Read's Wagon shop.
80—M. Schneider's Beer hall.
81—N. Weber's Summer garden.
82—Roach and McReynolds dry goods.
83—Charles Grosh Furniture store.
84—Samuel McRoberts grocer.
85—C. W. Aikins wagon shop.
86—W. W. Swerenger drug store.
87—Th. Bauer tailor shop.
88—Theodore Steinen's florist and gardener.
89—Jacob Kessler's farm.
90—H. B. Montgomery boot and shoe store.
91—O. E. Curtis jewelry store.
92—W. H. Reeme grocer.
93—Charles Adderley grocer.
94—C. Kepler's cigar store.
95—C. J. Mascott boarding house.
95—H. Mueller & Co. gun shop.
96—Decatur Turn hall.
97—Morning Sun office.



DECATUR IN 1878 (See reverse page for details)

H. Mueller started business in April, 1874, manufacturing water main tappers.

Roberts, Lytle and company in 1873 began the manufacture of burial caskets, at the corner of Morgan and North streets. In the firm were T. T. Roberts, R. P. Lytle and O. Z. Greene. This was the only casket manufacturing establishment in this section and business extended over a number of states.



CELEBRATION
OF THE
FOURTH OF JULY,
1876.

PROGRAMME OF EXERCISES.

1 At daylight a revolutionary salute of thirteen guns by the artillery.

2. After the salute all the bells of the city and throughout the county shall be rung.

3. At sunrise a national salute of thirty eight guns by the artillery.

4 The delegations, as they arrive by railroad, shall form on the platform on the east side of the I. C. R'y, at the Central depot, and move thence south to Eldorado street, thence west to Franklin street, thence south to Park street, thence west to North Water street thence south to East Main street, thence west to the old square, where the procession will be reformed as per instructions hereinafter given

5 At 11 o clock the procession will move forward, north on North Main street to Eldorado, thence west to the fair grounds.

6. After entrance at the fair grounds the Orator of the Day, Reader of the Declaration of Independence the Honorable Mayor and City Council Chaplain and other dignitaries will be escorted by the military to the platform in front of the amphitheatre, while the remainder of the procession as they enter the gate will oblique to the right and left, and ascend the amphitheatre simultaneously at the north and south entrances thereof

7 Music by the Decatur Band

8 Music

9 Prayer by the Chaplain

10. Music.

11 Reading of the Declaration of Independence by Miss Lou C Allen

12. Martial Music

13 Centennial Salute of 100 guns by the artillery

14 Recreation and Dinner

15 Music by the Decatur Band

16 Reading of Historical Sketch of Macon county

17 Music.

18 Oration by the Hon Richard J Oglesby, orator of the day

In the evening a grand display of fireworks will take place at the foot of South Water street

Republican Steam Job Print Decatur

CELEBRATION PROGRAM

H. W. Hill and company (H. W. Hill and C. P. Housum) in 1872 began the manufacture of the hog rings, ringer and tongs, invented by Mr. Hill. Business eventually was done from coast to coast and in Europe. The plant was located at Main and Church streets.

The Decatur Novelty works, Farris and Oakes, proprietors, was established in 1875 by Mr. Farris, for machine work and repairing.

The Decatur Bagging company factory, started in 1875, was a big industry for a number of years. It was located on Cerro Gordo, near Franklin. The firm was composed of Moses Jerome, A. W. Conklin and D. S. Shellabarger. At one time it employed 160 men and women.

Herman Post started in the jewelry business in 1872.

Kaufman and Bachrach, clothiers, started business about 1877. In 1884 Mr. Bachrach assumed entire control.

The Decatur Tent and Awning company began business in 1879.

TEMPERANCE TABERNACLE

Decatur has been the scene of many temperance movements, the biggest being during the '70s and '80s, when the entire country was being swept by the temperance wave. The Good Templars order, which flourished for many years, had its start at that time.

The big temperance tabernacle, which occupied the present site of the Linn and Scruggs store, was built in 1878 and was ready for the meeting of the National Christian Temperance Union which was held in October.[4] The dedication of the tabernacle took place Oct. 23, 1878, in connection with that meeting. Francis Murphy, Colonel H. W. Rowell and Jake Hoofstitler were among the speakers.

Franklin Priest was one of the Decatur men active in the construction of that building. Among other things he furnished bricks. The bricks came from the walls of the old Priest distillery. It was a curious coincidence that the material from the old distillery should go into the walls of the temple of temperance. Mr. Priest later bought the lot on which the tabernacle stood.

The tabernacle had a seating capacity of 3,500 and was the biggest auditorium Decatur had had up to that time. It was the scene of all the city's big gatherings for years. Jake Hoofstitler and other temperance agitators often spoke there in the cause of temperance, and temperance plays were given.

Musical concerts often were heard in the tabernacle. Once S. M. Lutz directed a choir of 500 voices in a concert there. The choir was made up of voices from Bloomington, Springfield, Pana, Shelbyville, Paris, Mattoon, Decatur and other cities. The tabernacle was the scene of several of the gatherings during the reunion here of General U. S. Grant's regiment in October, 1880.

In 1883 T. T. Van Allen took control of the tabernacle, and made it into a skating rink. Later it was used as an armory, for a medicine show, and for business purposes, the Peter Perl undertaking establishment and a livery barn being conducted in it. After the Bachmans bought the lot the old tabernacle was torn down in 1912, and the present Bachman building on the site was started.

Professor Charles Leonard came to Decatur in 1874 and started a dancing school. He was assisted by his daughter, Kate (Cassell), who continued it after his death, teaching the art altogether for more than fifty years.

On July 4, 1876, Decatur properly celebrated the nation's centennial. The illustration, on another page, giving the program for that day, tells the story.

Decatur's population in 1870 was 7,161. In 1880 the census report showed 9,547 inhabitants. Though not making a large gain in numbers, the city had made progress in other ways and was on a steady march upward.

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[1] A Peoria newspaper wag, referring to the drouth that summer of 1871, wrote as follows: "The city dads should station the police along the river, for if they don't some drunk is going to wander down there some night and drink up what is left of the stream."

[2] Joe Cannon was in Decatur in April, 1872, looking after his prospects as a Republican candidate for the nomination of congressman. He got the nomination and won the place. That was his first term in congress, the beginning of his long record of service in that body.

[3] The first boring for coal in Decatur was made in December, 1869. George W. Darling made the boring in the Race pasture at the junction of the T. W. & W. and D. and E. St. L. The city council appropriated $1,000 to assist in the work. Many difficulties were met and finally the work was stopped, and the boring was transferred to the Johns pasture. Later Darling left town, and then the excitement was over. A year previous to this a shaft had been sunk at Macon, but it was put out of business by water.

[4] The Decatur W. C. T. U. was started in 1874. It was first known as the Temperance league. Mrs. Hiram Buck was the president and Mrs. H. C. Johns secretary. Within a few years the name was changed to Woman's Christian Temperance Union and the organization affiliated with the state W. C. T. U. The W. C. T. U. fountain between the Wabash and Illinois Central railroad stations, erected in 1906, was donated by Thomas Davis of Macon.

CHAPTER LII

DECATUR ROLLING MILL

THRILLS aplenty broke in upon the peacefulness of life in Decatur in the '70s when for a few years it was the location of the Decatur Rolling Mill.

The mill did not stay long, but while it was here Decatur enjoyed a boom. When it left, it was the biggest blow in an industrial way that Decatur had ever suffered.

There was no lack of excitement during the rolling mill day. The hard work at such a plant necessitated having employes that were men of great physical strength. They were men of brawn, but while they were hard workers they were also hard drinkers and hard fighters. Rough and tumble fights were frequent, especially on Sundays and holidays. The men drew good pay and they spent much for drink. They were proud of their ability to fight and were not only ready but anxious to have it out with the other fellow.

Those were the days when the "levee", the district in the neighborhood of East Eldorado, Front and Cerro Gordo streets, was born, and when it saw its most hilarious moments. Front street then was lined with saloons. Folks who lived in Decatur in the time of the rolling mill never forgot the impression it made upon them.

Yet it left its impress upon Decatur in other ways. Before the coming of the mill, the city ended at Jasper street. During the period it was here, several additions to the city were laid out, known as first, second, third, and fourth Rolling Mill additions. In these additions we still have reminders of the rolling mill promoters in the names of several streets, Stone and Witt, and others. East avenue was formerly Chisholm street, named for a member of the rolling mill company.

Many new houses were built during this period, and the chapel known as the Rolling Mill chapel, which later became an Episcopal mission, was erected on East Eldorado street.

Probably the greatest influence the mill had was in bringing about the beginning of the Decatur waterworks system. In order to provide water for this mill, the first waterworks plant was built.

The rolling mill came to Decatur in 1870. Messrs. Chisholm, Stone and Walters of the Cleveland Rolling mill company had been here the fall previous to select location and make other arrangements. The site was donated by the city. Franklin Priest was then mayor, and it is thought that it was through his influence that the mill was brought here.

The company had similar mills in operation in Harmony, Ind., and Chicago. Erection of the Decatur plant took place in 1870, and in the spring of 1871 operations began. The company was incorporated May 16, 1870, with capitalization of $300,000. The purpose was to manufacture railroad iron.

A. B. Stone was president of the company and Colonel W. H. Harris was secretary and general manager. Directors were A. Stone, Jr., S. Witt, Henry Chisholm, H. B. Stone and William Chisholm. The mill was located east of the railroad depot, about where the Decatur coal shaft was later.

In the neighborhood of 400 men were employed at the mill during the height of its prosperity. It was the busiest place in Decatur, and was a favorite stop for sightseers. The operation of the mill at night was a thrilling spectacle, the handling of the hot metal, the roaring furnaces and grinding machinery making a scene not to be forgotten. Often small particles of white hot metal would be thrown all over the mill, setting fire to workmen's clothing and to the building.

Sometimes there were accidents, and one day a tragedy occurred. One of the workmen was drawn into the machinery, his clothing having caught in the cogs, and he was crushed to death.

While the mill was located in Decatur it made the rails for the Illinois Midland railroad, one of Decatur's early railroads. Most of its output went to the Toledo, Wabash and Western railroad.

Officials of the rolling mill did not share the same reputation as their laborers. The Harris family especially made a place for itself immediately in Decatur's social and church circles. The Harrises were responsible for the building of the Rolling Mill chapel on East Eldorado street and Ira Harris was the Sunday school superintendent there. The Harrises were active workers in the Baptist church and helped build the First Baptist church building on Water street. Colonel W. H. Harris lived at the northwest corner of Eldorado and Broadway and Captain Ira Harris lived in the house across the street south.

The mill moved from Decatur to Rosedale, a suburb of Kansas City, in 1875, presumably to be nearer a market for its products. Steel rails were then coming into use in the east, but in the west iron rails were still being used. The Decatur mill did not make steel rails. A great deal of railroad construction was then going on in Kansas, and prospects were naturally much brighter. The establishment of a rolling mill in Springfield also was given as one of the reasons for the change.

The rolling mill brought hundreds to Decatur and it took most of them away again. It left a big gap when it moved away.

CHAPTER LIII

WATER SUPPLY

THERE'S a great difference between the old well in Howell's Hollow and beautiful Lake Decatur, yet both served the same need of Decatur—the need of a water supply—and the transition from one to the other is just another story of the development of the city.

For many years Decatur depended upon wells, public and private, for its water. The city had a public well on the "old square."[1] In the new square were two cisterns. Close to town were a number of good springs.

In the early years Decatur suffered a number of disastrous fires which would have been avoided if the city had had an adequate water supply, and fire fighting apparatus for using it. Chief of these was the Revere hotel fire, the story of which is told in another chapter.

WATERWORKS

First mention in city council records of a waterworks system is made in the report of the council meeting on Jan. 11, 1869, when an ordinance was passed to establish such a system. It provided for borrowing $50,000. However, Decatur did not get any waterworks then. Mayor Isaac C. Pugh thought it was a bad move. He complained that some of the rich citizens were not paying their taxes, and he did not want to burden the city with debt. The ordinance was vetoed and the matter dropped.

After Franklin Priest had been elected mayor in the spring of 1870 the matter of a waterworks system came up again, due to the fact that Decatur had been selected as the location of a rolling mill, and ample water supply for the mill had been promised.

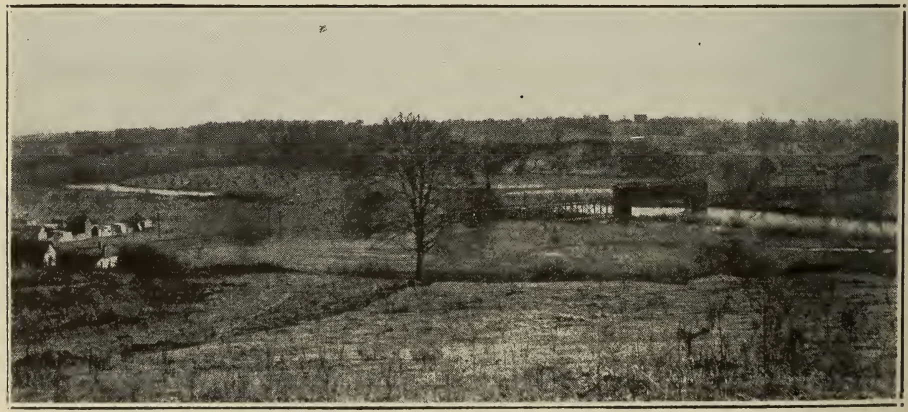
At a meeting Dec. 1, 1870, the council voted to lay pipe from the well on East Wood street to the Illinois Central tank at the depot, thence east to the rolling mill. The well was located in what was known as Howell's Hollow, in the neighborhood of East Wood street and Broadway, on land belonging to Gilbert Howell. This well had been dug during the summer of 1870. It was 10 feet square and 30 to 40 feet deep. On Feb. 6, 1871, the council again took action to lay pipe to the rolling mill.

At that same meeting, the council, realizing that the well would not furnish an adequate supply of water to the mill, decided to build a waterworks plant at the river, and bonds to the amount of $30,000 were issued. Work was stopped then on some additional wells which had been started.

Considerable sentiment in favor of a waterworks plant had been worked up by this time, due mostly to the meeting of citizens held Jan. 16, which had been addressed by Honorable T. T. Flagler, president of the Holly Manufacturing company of Lockport, N. Y.[2] Promoters and opposers of the project had gathered at that meeting in such numbers that the council rooms would not hold them all and it was necessary to adjourn to the court room. Mr. Flagler was a persuasive talker, and the citizens were so filled with enthusiasm over the prospect of a water system that they passed a resolution to the effect that the city council be asked to contract for machinery for a waterworks plant, and that the work be completed at a cost not to exceed $100,000. The resolution was presented by E. O. Smith.

The city had already purchased a Cameron pump, which had been installed at the well on Wood street, on Dec. 1, 1870. This pump had a capacity of 500,000 gallons of water daily, but it was soon found that it was not sufficient. That pump had cost the city $1,460.

Ground for the pumping station on the river was purchased May 29, 1871, from Peddecord & Burrows. It was known as the Priest distillery property. It was voted to lay a twelve inch main from the station to Lincoln square, a distance of one mile. Dodson & Holmes were given a contract to furnish a No. 1 Holly pump, two No. 6 Holly patent rotary fire pumps, and 5,280 feet of twelve inch main. All of this was to be installed for $34,937. This equipment was guaranteed to furnish 1,000,000 gallons of water a day.



THE SANGAMON VALLEY ABOVE WATERWORKS (ABOUT 1900)
Nearly all this land now is covered by the lake. The old covered bridge was replaced by the county bridge. The houses in the picture were all removed when the lake was formed.

When the plant was completed Benson N. Henkle was installed as chief engineer. H. Mueller was made city plumber at the same time.

When the first test of the plant was made, the entire town turned out to see it. The test took place at the corner of Broadway and East Main, where a temporary fireplug had been installed. The test consisted of throwing water over the old oil mill.

The next necessity was a reservoir, as it had been found that whenever the river was high, the water was too muddy for use. In 1874 a reservoir 100 feet long, ten feet wide and six feet deep was made. Then in 1877 it was enlarged, making its length 500 feet. This furnished an excellent supply of filtered water, the water seeping through gravel from the river. For emergencies, a direct connection was made from the reservoir to the river.

The building of a dam across the river, to provide a larger supply of water when the river was low, was the next step taken. This was done in October, 1878.

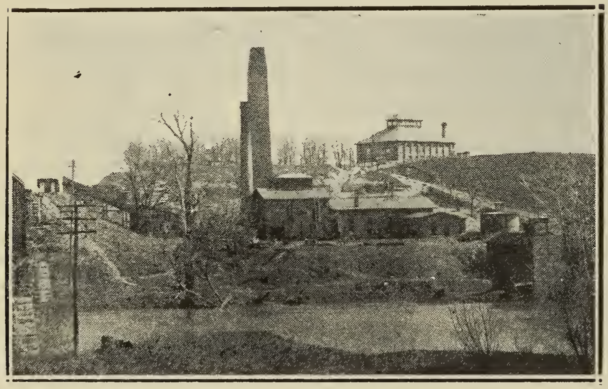
Decatur was continually growing and was constantly using more water, making additions to the plant necessary. On March 9, 1882, a Clapp & Jones pump was purchased, and installed to take the place of the Holly pump. It had pumping capacity of 3,000,000 gallons of water a day. Its cost was $7,550.

On Jan. 14, 1884, two pumps were bought from E. P. Allis and Company of Milwaukee, costing $14,500. These two had capacity of

THE FIRST DAM

—Photo by J. E. Bering.

2,000,000 gallons each. They are still in use. These pumps raised the daily capacity to 7,000,000 gallons.



WATERWORKS PLANT IN 1896

It was not long until the need of a more adequate filter plant was felt, and in the year 1894 contract was made for a Warren filter made by the Cumberland Manufacturing company of Boston. This and other additions cost $50,000.

In 1908-1909 a new pumping station was erected at a cost of $225,000 and a 6,000,000 gallon pump put into operation.

In 1910 a new light plant was erected at a cost of $110,000, the city having installed a light plant about 25 years before. A new dam also was built that year.

The city voted March 28, 1913, for a $135,000 bond issue to erect a new filter plant, and the contract was given later to the New York Continental Jewel Filtration company. The contract price was $129,899.

CREATE LAKE

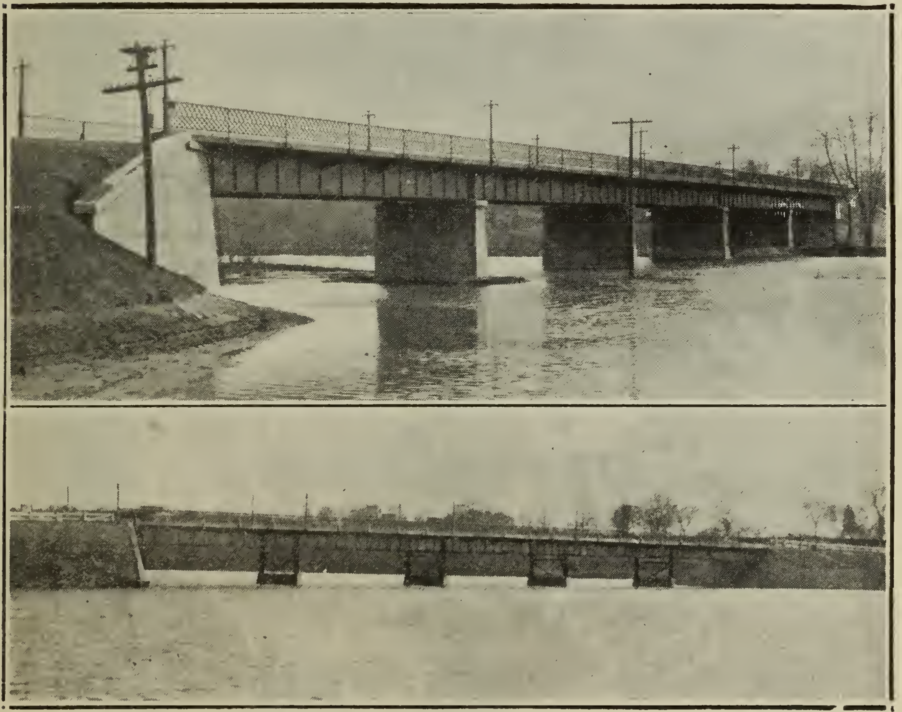
ONE VIEW OF LAKE

The next few years saw the biggest development in the story of the water supply for Decatur—the water impounding project which included the building of a dam and creation of a lake. This lake, called Lake Decatur, fourteen miles long and from one-half to a mile wide, contains enough water to keep Decatur supplied for two years without a drop of rain. Eight billion gallons of water are impounded. Decatur need never fear a shortage of water. The total cost of the improvements was more than $2,000,000.

The dam was erected at a cost of $725,000. The length of the spillway is 480 feet, and the total length of the dam is 1900 feet. It is built to hold water at a 610 foot level above sea, and the addition of flash boards will raise the level to 612 feet. The water level before the creation of the lake was 595 feet.

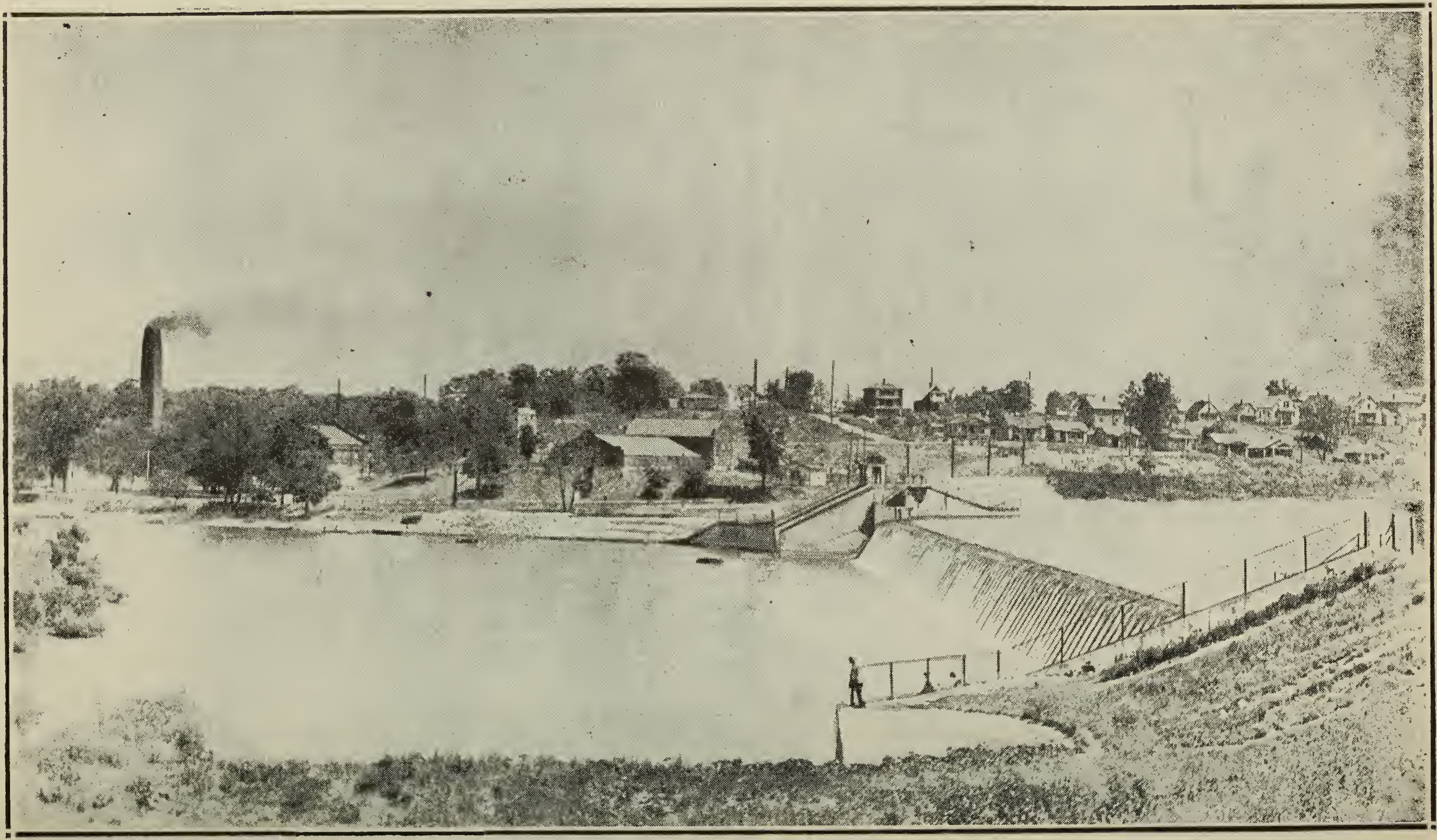
It was necessary to purchase 4,000 acres of land at a 615 foot level for the lake. The land cost $599,000. Other expenses in connection with the project were $109,558 for clearing the land, $450,000 for roads and bridges, and $128,000 for riprapping. At the time of this development the county bridge was raised 14 feet, giving it a height of 15 feet above the lake level.

The dam itself was financed by the city, but the rest of the project was taken care of by the Decatur Water Supply company, a corporation of Decatur citizens formed to provide $1,000,000. Stock in the company in five days was oversubscribed to $1,200,000.



COUNTY BRIDGES

Upper—Before being raised. Lower—After being raised.



WATERWORKS AND DAM IN 1929

According to the agreement made, the income from city water rents is used to pay for the operation of the waterworks plant, to pay dividends on preferred stock of the company, and to retire stock. Within sixteen years from the date of organization all the stock will have been retired, and the land deeded to the city.

This project, under way for three years, was completed in 1923. A five-day celebration marked its completion.

Improvements and additions have continued at the waterworks plant. In 1926 additions costing $143,689.02 were made to the filter house. This increased the capacity of the plant to 18,000,000 gallons of water daily. Other recent improvements are a water softener, chlorinator, and new carbonator plant.

Water mains cover the entire city, and the number of water meters in use in 1929 was 13,625. That year the average daily consumption of water was 7,000,000 gallons.

The name of Harry Ruthrauff was linked with the waterworks history for many years. He was employed first in June, 1888, as a helper or calker of water pipe, then served as foreman and later as water inspector and plumbing inspector. In 1911 he was elected one of the city commissioners and was made head of the department of public property, which gave him oversight of the waterworks. He served in that capacity until 1927.

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[1] The first public well was authorized June 6, 1831, when the county commissioners gave James Johnson authority to dig a well in the town of Decatur on Block 2, west half of lot 8, for a public well. Years later a well was dug in the middle of the old square and for many years an old wooden pump stood there, with a tin cup chained to it. This old well was filled up at the time the transfer house was built.

[2] At the time of the mass meeting of citizens in 1871 there was some opposition to the building of a waterworks plant. Franklin Priest, mayor, who was a far-sighted man, but whose advice was not always followed, made the remark at that time: "This is going to be a city. We should now begin to buy land for parks and sites for firehouses. Some day we will have to pay a high price for them, but now we can get land at the price of vacant property." The land he was talking about was included in the section bounded on the north by the Wabash, on the east by Hilton street, on the south by Wood street, and on the west by Monroe Street. Some objectors said: "We've got a park now, Central park, but it is not used by anything but the rabbits."

CHAPTER LIV

FIRE DEPARTMENT

FIRE fighting in the early days of Decatur was a volunteer service. For many years there was no kind of organized effort, but after the big fire in the business district in 1859, Decatur recognized the fact that it should have some protection against fire. During the '60s bucket brigades were started, and in 1868 a hook and ladder company was organized. Rescue Hose team had its beginning in 1871, with Franklin Priest as chief and Joseph Hewes as first assistant. It numbered about thirty-four men.

At the time of the Revere hotel fire in April, 1871, it was stated that there were two volunteer companies, and the only apparatus was a small hook and ladder wagon and a number of rubber buckets. Ben Dodson was captain of one company and Franklin Priest of the other.

In the days before the waterworks started it was necessary to have a bucket brigade. Men were lined up in a row from the nearest well to the scene of the fire. As fast as the buckets were filled with water at the pump, they were passed down the line from one to another until they reached the fire. In spite of what was spilled on the way, considerable water could be thrown on a fire in this way. The buckets came back to the well by way of a second line of men.

After the waterworks had been established at the river, and water mains laid, hose carts were purchased. The volunteer fire department was regularly organized in July, 1872, with Franklin Priest as chief engineer, Joseph S. Hewes first assistant and H. P. Christie second assistant.[1] From that time on until the city organized a paid fire department, the volunteer companies had a brilliant record in Decatur and brought fame by honors won in state and national firemen's tournaments.

Hose Co. No. 1 of the Volunteer Fire department was organized at a meeting held June 20, 1872. H. P. Christie was chairman, and C. P. Housum secretary of that meeting.

J. S. Hewes, first assistant engineer of the department, stated the object of the meeting and called for volunteers. The following men handed in their names:

W. Athons, J. A. Brockway, George Corwine, F. Calvert, A. Diehl, W. W. Foster, John Gray, John Hudson, C. P. Housum, A. F. Imboden, R. F. Jones, P. Livergood, W. W. Mason, H. McClellan, William Montgomery, J. H. Miller, E. H. Mills, John McWhinney, George R. Priest, P. B. Provost, W. A. Ragan, J. Strausbaugh, J. S. Stoy, Peter Schuh, Caleb Smith, William Trowbridge, S. Weitzel, P. J. Williams.

Officers were chosen as follows:

Foreman—W. W. Mason
Assistant foreman—W. W. Foster
Secretary—C. P. Housum
Treasurer—H. McClellan
First pipeman—J. A. Brockway
Second pipeman—P. B. Provost
First plugman—A. Diehl
Second plugman—J. McWhinney

At a meeting June 26, 1872, called to organize Hose Company No. 2 J. S. Hewes, first assistant engineer, was appointed chairman and W. F. McEwen secretary. The following enrolled as members of the company:

S. H. Dwight
William Gibson
E. M. Misner
K. Harwood
C. C. Fuller
Charles Morey
C. D. Camp
F. A. Dunn
W. H. Spencer
William Hand
D. P. Elwood
T. F. Adams
Theo. Severns
E. N. Flasig
Emil Henry
B. B. Babcock
W. Cruikshank
Thomas Antrim
C. H. Brown
William Dodson
D. N. Syford
W. O. Betzer
W. F. McEwen
William Zinn
J. A. Roberts
A. Shoemaker
W. E. Winholtz
D. Bigelow
John Gaul
J. K. Bohrer

The following officers were elected:

Foreman—William H. Spencer
Assistant—Thomas Antrim
Secretary—W. F. McEwen
Treasurer—William Dodson
First pipeman—T. Severns
Second pipeman—John Gaul
First plugman—B. B. Babcock
Second plugman—William Hand

At the organization meeting of Young America Hook and Ladder Company, July 10, 1872, with J. S. Hewes in the chair and I. W. Ehrman as secretary, the following members reported:

John Ullrich
P. M. Wykoff
John Merriwether
William McClellan
W. H. Close
Samuel Newell
John Haworth
John Mauzy
Charles Laux
Al Ormsby
A. Howenstein
Enos Kepler
J. T. J. Gates
D. Churchman
George B. Peake
A. Zekind
Thomas Barrell
A. Bradley
J. F. Roach
Walter Taylor
William Harry
Charles Dempsey
George Martin
Richard Smith
I. W. Ehrman
B. F. Dodson
I. N. Martin
Darwin Greer
A. Nebinger
F. Priest, Jr.
J. G. Cloyd
Henry Holmes
L. M. Gill
J. G. Starr
F. Caldwell
William Young
John Schoenle
Godey Shoaff
George E. Ruth
William F. Ballard
William Stevens
A. Misenhelter
F. Pahmeyer
Lon Humphrey
H. Mueller
Robert Patterson
Edward Carter

Officers were elected as follows:

Foreman—B. F. Dodson
Assistant—F. Caldwell
Secretary—I. W. Ehrman
Treasurer—J. H. Merriwether
Hook director—Enos Kepler
Ladder Director—Charles Dempsey
Bucket Director—Darwin Greer
Ax Director—H. Mueller

Young America had its constitution and by-laws printed. Among the rules of the company was one to the effect that a member was subject to fine of not more than $5 for using profane or indecent language at any meeting of the company, and any member acting in a disorderly manner could be expelled.

At the time the volunteer department was being organized in 1872 a test of the waterworks and fire hose was held and proved very satisfactory. It was found the waterworks could throw six to eight streams of water over the highest houses very easily. The large crowd which assembled to see this demonstration was so enthusiastic that it gave three cheers for the waterworks.

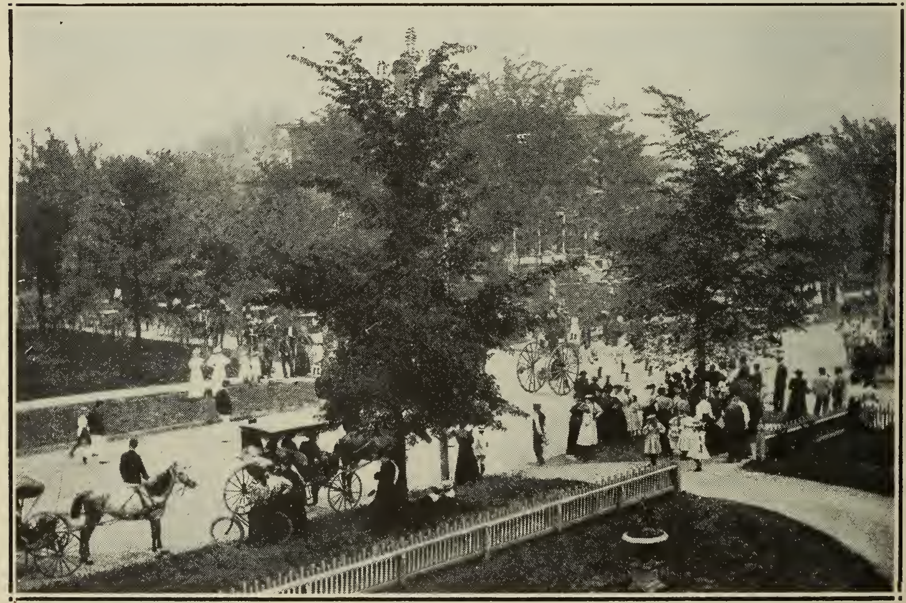
The firebell signals adopted were:

Hook and Ladder Co.	1—2—3	Hose Co. No. 2	3—2—1
Hose Co. No. 1	2—1—3	All companies	3—3—3

Hose Co. No. 1 was called Rescue Hose Company, and Company No. 2 was called Eldorado Company. A third company, called Harris Company, was organized later.

The No. 1 firehouse on West Main street was erected in 1872.[2]

In 1873 J. S. Hewes was named fire chief. He was succeeded in that office by H. P. Christie, H. B. Durfee, William Dodson, W. W.



FIREMEN'S PARADE, JULY 23, 1895

Photo taken at corner of West William and Edward Streets during firemen's tournament.

—Photo by J. E. Bering.

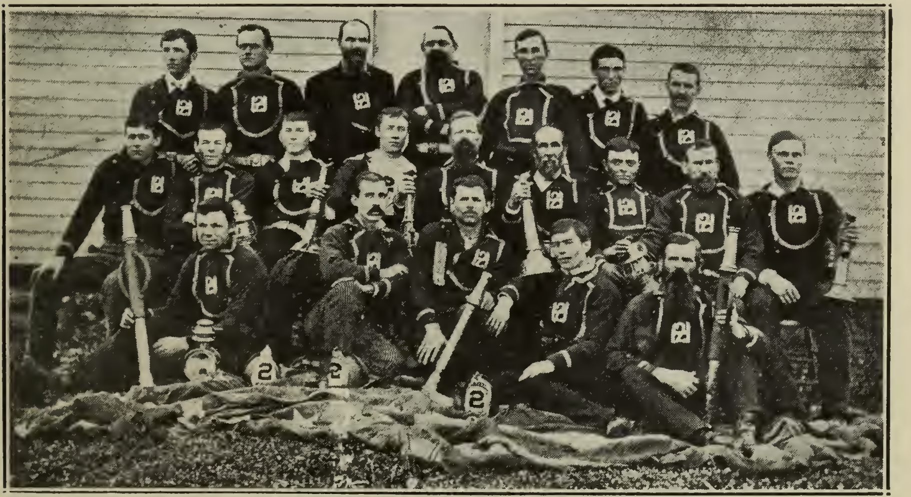
Foster and W. J. Wayne. Mr. Hewes served a second time, between the terms of Dodson and Foster.

In 1875 Neptune Hose company No. 3 was organized, taking the place of Harris Hose Co.

It was a great honor in those days to belong to one of the fire companies, for only swift runners were admitted. The hose companies were really the athletic clubs of the day, for they encouraged physical fitness. Fast work was needed in fighting fires, and only fast workers were wanted. There was much rivalry among the teams, each trying to outdo the other.

Firemen's tournaments were the big events of the times for many years in almost all the states and were great drawing cards. Each city sent its best team to the tournament to compete with the teams from other cities. A number of times tournaments were held in Decatur, the last one being in 1895.

Rescue Hose running team of Decatur was developed to a high point of efficiency and brought all kinds of honor to the Decatur fire department.[3] George Brett and Fred Litterer, hose couplers for this company, were considered the world champions. In 1881 they won the United States championship at the national tournament held in Council Bluffs, Ia. From that meeting the Decatur firemen came



HOSE COMPANY IN 1378

Top Row—Ed Leech, Marion Houck, Sullivan Burgess, Ned Weddle, Ed L. Martin, Charlie Matheney, Jake Weigand.

Second Row—Louis Bickes, Henry Cullen, C. W. Devore, Charlie Waughop, Bill Dodson, Andy Shoemaker, Brook Deardorff, Jesse Kepple, Charlie Hershey.

Bottom Row—Mike Canaday, Jim Cherry, Fred Litterer, Frank Montague, T. L. Antrim.

back with $1,000 prize money, $1,100 gate receipts, $600 grand sweepstakes prizes, billiard table, pool table and various other small prizes for records they had made. Brett and Litterer were able to make a coupling in 3½ seconds.

It was a gala day in Decatur when the firemen came home from this tournament. Decatur had one of its biggest celebrations to honor them. Speeches were made from a platform in Lincoln square. Judge William E. Nelson gave an address, and Governor Shelby M. Cullom presented congratulations on behalf of the state. Flowers were showered upon the fire heroes; music, banquet and ball featured the occasion. One hundred and eighty firemen marched to the banquet hall in Guard's armory.

George W. Kraft, who was captain of Rescue Hose company team for thirteen years, was physical director as well. He trained the men vigorously. Rescue's prize team in 1881 was composed of Captain Kraft; First Assistant Frank Winebrenner, Second Assistant C. W. Devore; Couplers Fred Litterer and George Brett; Plugmen Emil Young and William Young; and the following ropemen: William Rawley, Herman Martin, Tony Walser, Elmer Troutman, Fred Mueller, William Hardin, Mark Gates, Louie Bickes, Harvey W. Downing, Ed Leech, Charles Bennett, William Stewart, and Henry Cullen. Troutman and Devore, leaders, were exceptionally fast runners.

Rescue Company had for its motto "Spectemur Agendo" (Let us be tried by our actions). Constitution and by-laws of the company were adopted March 15, 1877, and copies printed. Members had to "toe the mark". They were subject to expulsion for disobedience, intoxication, failure to pay dues, absence from meetings and other causes. If a member failed to attend the funeral of a deceased member he was subject to fine.

When a fire occurred, the first man at the hose house rang the bell. That was the signal for all the firemen to gather as soon as possible. They dropped their work and rushed to the hose house, and as soon as enough had gathered they started off with the hose cart to the scene of the fire.

FIRST HOOK AND LADDER TRUCK
Left to right—Dick Devore, Ed Gates and Bill Young.

These volunteer companies served faithfully and well, with honor to themselves as well as to the city.

CHIEF DEVORE, 1900

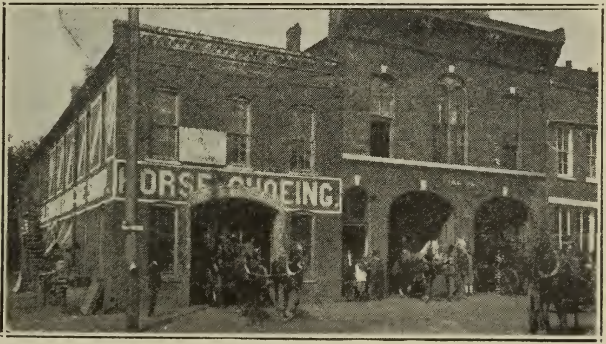
The city established a paid fire department in October, 1884, and this brought the career of the volunteers to an end, although their organizations were kept up for years afterwards for exhibition purposes.

When the paid fire department was started Will J. Wayne was made chief. He was at that time a member of the city council. There were only three men on the force, C. W. Devore, William Leiby and Edward Gates. Devore, who afterwards became chief, served first as pipeman on the chemical at No. 1 house. Later when No. 2 firehouse was built, he was appointed captain and served there until June 16, 1890, when he was made chief.[4]

On March 1, 1885, the city purchased the first team of fire horses and a hose wagon, and James Park was made driver. The first horses were "Frank" and "Rowdy".

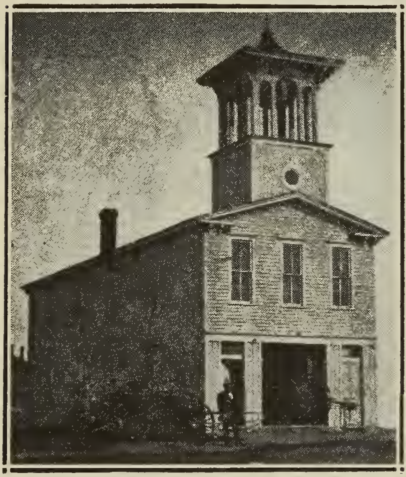
For many years the fire wagons were drawn by horses. After automobiles came into general use, the fire department was outfitted with motor equipment. By 1916 the last of the horses was gone.

There was genuine regret at the passing of the fire horses. No auto fire wagon can produce the thrill which a run of the fire department gave, when the sleek horses dashed through the streets. The chief's horse was the first to give way to the automobile. Others followed quickly. To the firemen it was like parting with old friends when the splendid



OFF TO THE FIRE! (NO. 1 HOUSE)

horses, which had been their comrades, were led away. The annual run of the fire department in the days when horses drew the wagons, always brought out thousands of spectators. It was a sight worth seeing.



NEPTUNE HOSE HOUSE
The man in picture is Chief Dodson.

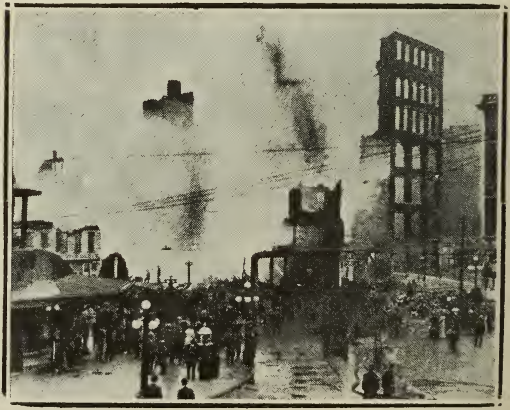
The next first chief after W. J. Wayne was Frank Winebrenner, and he was succeeded by W. W. Foster. Foster was followed by C. W. Devore, who was chief from 1890 until his death in 1920. He was succeeded by Edward Platt, who served until 1928, when S. T. Lowry was made chief.

Decatur's first fire house was No. 1 on West Main street, erected in 1872. Neptune Hose house on East Eldorado street, was the next, but it was afterwards sold. The Morgan street house was built in 1888. In the early history of the department, the tabernacle at Prairie and Main streets, and a building at Cerro Gordo and Franklin also were used as headquarters for hose companies.

The No. 3 house on North Main street was built in 1902. Since then, three more houses have been added, No. 4 at Locust and Jasper streets, No. 5 on South 22nd street, and No. 6 at Fairview and Eldorado.

No. 1. station was moved in 1920 to a new building at Franklin and Wood streets.

Approximately sixty men make up the fire department of today. In 1929 they answered 536 alarms. Since the beginning of the department thousands of fires have been fought, and millions of dollars worth of property saved.[5]



DECATUR-ARCADE HOTEL FIRE

Some of the biggest fires in the history of Decatur were:

Union elevator, Nov. 21, 1890, $100,000
Library block, Feb. 21, 1892, $100,000
Powers opera house, Linn & Scruggs, Nov. 5, 1895, $250,000
Mueller, Platt & Wheeland, Feb. 11, 1901, $116,000
Decatur Cereal Mill, June 8, 1909, $265,000
Morehouse & Wells, and others, Aug. 22, 1909, $508,000
Mantel factory, Jan. 8, 1911, $200,000
Powers theater, Linn & Scruggs, April 7, 1914, $565,117
Decatur and Arcade hotels, April 21, 1915, $180,000
Scovill Furniture store, Oct. 1, 1917, $140,000
Leader Iron Works, Nov. 6, 1920, $125,000
Shellabarger Elevator Co., Feb. 3, 1923, $125,000
Wabash shops and cars, Feb. 26, 1924, $750,000
Irwin, Neisler Co., Decatur Tent and Awning Co., Dec. 25, 1925, $100,000
W. C. Starr garage, and others, May 23, 1928, $165,000

VOLUNTEER FIREMEN'S ASSOCIATION

The Volunteer Firemen's association was organized in 1895. Its object was to perpetuate the good fellowship and traditions of the years the volunteer firemen had spent together fighting fires, and to be of any assistance, if needed, to the regular city fire department.

Of the 180 original members of the association only five were able to attend the meeting early in the year 1930. At that time only twelve members were still living, and only eight of them in Decatur. Officers elected at that meeting were:

President—George W. Kraft
First Vice—William Danzeisen
Second Vice—Homer Jimison
Third Vice—W. H. Barnett
Secretary-treasurer—W. H. Barnett

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[1] It was due to leading business men of the city, among them James Millikin, that the fire department was organized. They called attention to the fact that the city did not have money to have a paid department and must depend on volunteers. The business men agreed to purchase hose and hose reel, and otherwise assist, if the young men would form volunteer organizations for fighting fires.

[2] When the hose house on West Main street was built in 1872 the idea was conceived that a tower would be a good thing as a lookout, so the firemen could look out for fires over the city. In the tower was hung the bell to call the firemen together. The tower may have done good service as a lookout for some years, but eventually such service was considerably restricted by the tall buildings. The tower was taken down in 1910.

[3] Charles Winebrenner was said to have been the fastest runner on the team. His record was 150 yards in fifteen seconds. Winebrenner afterwards went to Spokane, Wash., where he became fire chief.

[4] C. W. Devore started his career as a farm hand. He was working on a farm east of Decatur at $17 a month in 1878, when two of Decatur's firemen, Tom Antrim and Andy Shoemaker, happened to see a fast run Devore made one Saturday at a game of rounder.

"We must have that fellow on our team," they said. "We'll get him if we have to draft him."

When the matter was presented to Devore he objected, saying he had to work and he had a good job on the farm. Tom and Andy then got busy. Before night they had found a job for Devore at the furniture factory at $1.50 a day. Board and room could be had for 50 cents a day. Devore accepted the job and became a member of the hose company. From that time until his death he was connected with Decatur's fire department.

[5] One of the most spectacular fires ever seen in Decatur was the Decatur Gun store fire on July 4, 1901. It started at midnight and in fifteen minutes the building and contents were destroyed.

There were thousands of explosions. People within hearing distance thought some one was shooting off fireworks. The fireworks which exploded shot in all directions. A newspaper writer who was one of the first on hand wrote the following description of the conflagration:

"Added to the awful grandeur of flames leaping to the sky was the wierdness and fearsomeness of countless and tremendous explosions. It was a young volcano with a peak of rapid fire artillery booming from its midst. Payne's most spectacular production would look tame beside it.

"There was no slow creeping of the flames hidden behind clouds of smoke, but in a flash the building was aflame from end to end and from top to bottom. In a few seconds after the report of the first explosion was heard, the flames were leaping from the front and top of the building, and the air was filled with the crash of the burning explosives.

"Prairie avenue in front and for the rest of the block on either side was swept by a rain of sky rockets and other fiery missiles, making it apparently certain death to venture into range. Buildings across the street were bombarded with every kind of fireworks. It looked as if every building in the neighborhood would be burned.

"The noise was like a regiment of musketry in action, and the flutter of the small arms was punctuated from time to time by a louder detonation, suggesting the support of a battery of light artillery. Early arrivals on the scene peered fearfully around the corners but kept carefully out of range.

"As the rockets shot up through the network of wires on Prairie Avenue the lines were crossed and spat zig-zag lightning, adding to the picturesqueness of the scene and to the danger as well."

CHAPTER LV

FRANKLIN PRIEST

FRANKLIN PRIEST often has been called a captain of industry and he deserved that title. For years he had more business interests in Decatur than any other man has ever been known to have. A catalog of his enterprises would sound like a business directory. He was a man of courage and vision, and in fact was twenty-five years ahead of his time.

FRANKLIN PRIEST

When he saw that Decatur needed a business of a certain sort he started such a business. He had come here in 1853 from Springfield and within a few years was Decatur's most active resident. During his business career in Decatur there were few lines of business in which he was not interested.

He had a grist mill, a saw mill, a distillery, a cooper shop, a blacksmith shop, a brick yard, a tannery, a general store. He ran an omnibus line, a street car line, a hotel. He was interested in the woolen mills and in real estate. He served in the council and five different times was elected mayor.

He once offered the city a public market place, the ground now occupied by Merchant street and Central block, and a block farther north if needed. He was the man who opened up Merchant street.

Shortly after Mr. Priest came to Decatur he and Asa Eastman of Springfield bought the saw and grist mill of Orlando Powers. That was the time the railroads were being built, and the two men entered into contract to furnish the bridge timbers and ties for the railroads. It started Decatur on a period of activity heretofore unparalleled. Forces of men were kept busy in the woods along the Sangamon cutting timber and hauling it to the mill.

When Mr. Priest first made his offer to the city of ground for a public market, the offer was accepted by the council. Had that action not been vetoed by the mayor, the map of the Lincoln square section would be different from what it is today, for it was after the rejection of the offer that Mr. Priest conceived the idea of laying out Merchant street. His idea was to get rid of the inside northeast corner of the square, which was considered poor for business uses.

The plat of Mr. Priest's resurvey of lots 5, 6, 7, Block 2, of the town of Decatur, was filed June 15, 1857. The plat provided for Merchant street 54 feet wide, and for the division of that stretch between Merchant and Main streets into twelve lots, each 20 feet by 22 feet, the latter being the distance east and west.

The veto of the plan for the public market was due to the protests made against it by a number of Decatur citizens, led by E. O. Smith. These protests came from persons interested in the section known as the New square, now Central park. They naturally feared that business would be taken away from them. The objectors included some influential men, such as Mr. Smith, and the mayor was persuaded to put his veto on the project.

One of the conditions which Mr. Priest had attached to the offer of the market place was that the ground was to be planked. For some time Mr. Priest had been urging that the down town streets of the city be planked. At that time that seemed to be the only paving material available. Mr. Priest recognized the handicap of muddy streets and he was continually trying to find a solution of that problem. Evidently, however, he had little cooperation from the other merchants of Decatur.

Most of Mr. Priest's earliest enterprises were centered about the vicinity of Franklin and Priest streets, both named for him. Priest street afterward was changed to Decatur street. They were located on the Town Branch, which was then a respectable-sized creek, and helped to furnish water. There was also a fine spring there. It was because of the water supply that this location was chosen.

In many of Mr. Priest's enterprises his brother, Valentine, was associated with him.

The citizen of today will have to use his imagination to picture the scene in the valley of the Town Branch in that day. Farmers came from miles around with their grain to the grist mill. Since it was necessary for each to wait his turn, often a goodly crowd gathered. Old timers have been known to say that they remembered when as high as 200 teams would be waiting in the vicinity, while the owners would be taking their turns at the mill.

The scene was particularly interesting and cheery at night, for many would have to remain over night. Campfires would be started and the hills would be dotted with the bright lights. Mr. Priest's mill there was destroyed by fire in the late '60s.

In his later years Mr. Priest's interests were centered in the uptown district. He took over an unfinished hotel building, which had been started by W. S. Crissey, finished the building and leased it as a hotel, later taking over the business himself. This was the hotel which afterwards became known as the New Deming hotel and still later the Decatur hotel. It was located at the northwest corner of the Old square. This building was destroyed by fire. At the northeast corner of the square Mr. Priest conducted his store. His home was in the 200 block on North Main street, and there he had his offices when he conducted the omnibus line and later the street railway line.

His part in civic life in Decatur was an important one. He was honored to the extent of being elected five different times as the mayor of Decatur. Besides, he was elected three different times as a member of the city council. He was a member of the first council after Decatur was granted its special city charter. The confidence thus reposed in him by his fellow citizens was a glowing tribute to the man.

Mr. Priest did not have all smooth sailing, however. He suffered many losses and misfortunes. His mills and other industries centered at Franklin and Priest streets were swept away by fire.

At the time of the Civil war Mr. Priest got into difficulty with the government over whisky tax, and he was obliged to stand punishment for violation of the revenue law. Two carloads of whisky shipped to St. Louis were seized by the government agents and the legal procedure which followed nearly ruined Mr. Priest. By many it was believed that Mr. Priest knew nothing about the shipment of this whisky without paying the tax; that it was a partner of Mr. Priest who had been responsible. Mr. Priest, however, took the blame, and was the one who paid.

When his case went to trial he pleaded his own case, and it was said to have been a most brilliant plea. Among other things he told the court that when the soldiers of the One Hundred Fifteenth and One Hundred Sixteenth Regiments went out from Decatur to the war they owed him $18,000 for equipment furnished, and so that money was, in a sense, loaned to the government. Though the judge admitted the justice of the statement, it could hold no weight in the trial and Mr. Priest was obliged to take his punishment.

The general disturbance of business conditions at the time of the Civil war had its effect on Mr. Priest as well as on thousands of others. Mr. Priest had done his business largely on credit. He had always been able to get all the credit he wanted. What resources he had were so affected by the sudden change in values that he was badly crippled during the rest of his business life in Decatur.

CHAPTER LVI

MULES TO MOTORS

A funny-looking vehicle wended its way along North Main street one day in the '70s. People lined the street to look at it. It attracted as much attention as a circus parade.

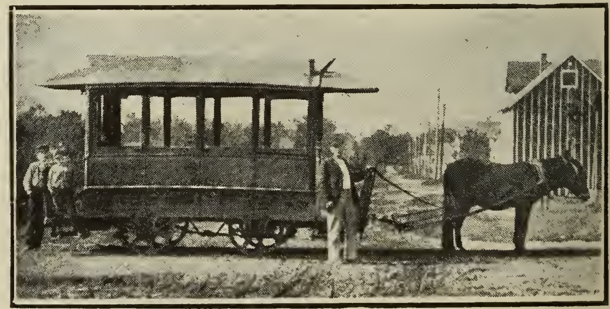
If the same vehicle went along North Main street today, it would bring many a laugh. But it didn't in the '70s, for it meant something—a whole lot—to the people of Decatur. It was their first street car.

Franklin Priest was the man who made the first attempt to pull Decatur out of the mud by inaugurating street car service between the "Old square" and the railroad station.

Naturally the promoter of the enterprise was elated the day his railway was put into operation. Ever since he had come to Decatur he had been battling mud. The streets were sloughs of despair. There was no drainage. In wet weather the mud was bottomless. Often it was impossible for the omnibuses, though pulled by four horses or mules, to make the trip from the depot, and trunks had to be brought to the hotels on wheelbarrows.

Mr. Priest built the car line largely to bridge the chasm between the railroad station and his hotel on the square.

"The Decatur Horse Railway and Carrying company" was the title given by Mr. Priest to his line. The franchise was granted by the city of Decatur Nov. 14, 1876. It gave Mr. Priest permission to lay a street car track from the depot to the Old square by way of North Main and East Cerro Gordo streets, and also from the square to the P. D. & E. depot on East Main, and a line south on Main street and Cemetery street to Greenwood cemetery. The franchise was for fifty years. Mr. Priest never dreamed that inside of ten years his car line, which started off with such bright hopes, would be dug up and cast



FIRST STREET CAR

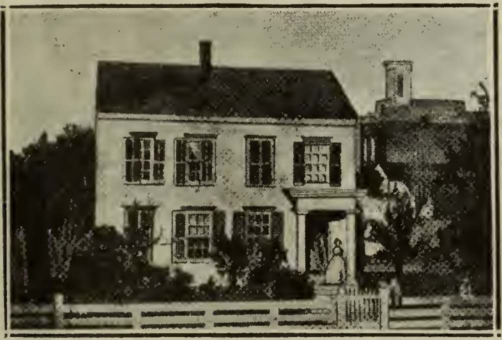
aside by Decatur citizens. The line to the railroad station was the only one built by him. Decatur had not yet reached a place where such a service would be profitable. The time never came when Mr. Priest was able to extend the service as provided for in the franchise.

Horse or mule power was used in drawing those first street cars in Decatur. The use of a locomotive was prohibited, and electric cars had not yet been heard of. The cars followed a narrow gauge track beginning at the Old square and running on North Main street to Cerro Gordo, then east to the station, a mile in all. Passengers doubtless bounced up and down as the cars were pulled along their bumpy way.

Those first cars were one-man and one-horse cars, not much more than dumpy little boxes. Philip Miller and Frank Taylor were the first car drivers. They had been driving omnibuses for Mr. Priest, who had been running a bus line from his hotel on the square to the railroad depot. The fare, 5 cents, was dropped in a box as now. When the street cars were put into operation these two men were "promoted" to the new line. Two cars were in service, there being a passing track midway on the line. The cars started simultaneously from each end of the line.

The driver was not only driver and conductor both, but he had another duty, a unique task. It was his business to stop any place along the way and wake up the patron who wanted to catch an early train out of town. If John Doe left word to be called at 6:30 to make a train, Mr. Miller or Mr. Taylor would halt his car, go to Doe's home and see that he was awakened, then return to his car and proceed on his way. That was service! But that was characteristic of Franklin Priest. The story of his life in Decatur shows that one enterprise after another he inaugurated to fill some need of the people.

Mr. Priest was the president and the manager of the company, and later his son, J. Frank Priest, became his assistant manager. The car barns were at the rear of the Priest home at 224 North Main street. A spur track was laid from the main track in the street in the alley to



FRANKLIN PRIEST'S HOME
224 North Main

the barn. Mr. Priest maintained his offices in his home. Though the car line was well patronized at first it never made enough money to warrant any improvements, and instead of getting better the line deteriorated. The town was growing. The car line was getting poorer. It seemed doomed to failure. The final straw that broke the camel's back was the organization of the Citizens Street Railway company which started a new and a better car service in 1883.

The new company was composed of David S. Shellabarger, William L. Ferguson and Arthur E. Kinney. They constructed a line on the present route of the depot line of the Illinois Power and Light corporation. Better cars were secured, the line was better built, and better service was given. Naturally the new line got the business. That spelled the final defeat of Mr. Priest's enterprise.

The Priest line stayed in operation until 1886, but by that time it had become a laughing stock. Considering it a discredit to the city, the council ordered the tracks removed. The order was not heeded at once, and one night the tracks were torn up and piled at the curb by irate citizens.

That meant the end of Mr. Priest's connection with Decatur. He moved to Chicago where he spent the rest of his life. He died there Jan. 17, 1890.

The equipment of the Citizens Street Railway company on its first line included three small cars, each pulled by a mule. Within the next few years other lines were built and soon the company was operating nine or ten cars with horses and mules.

Even a street car runaway was known then. One day a frightened mule started to run, from in front of the St. Nicholas, and dragged his street car behind him across the square and up North Main before he was stopped.

The Water and West Main street lines were the first extensions. The line on West Main was extended to the Wabash track to provide service to the baseball park, south of West Main and east of the Wabash, sponsored by the street railway company; also to Oakland park, which the street railway company leased in 1884.

Competition in the street car business brought about the electrification of the line in 1889, and gave Decatur the distinction of being the third city in the country to have electric cars. Cincinnati and Detroit were the only other two cities so equipped. The lines there were largely experimental, so Decatur was about the very first to have electric street cars.

In the latter part of the year 1888 E. J. Martin came to Decatur from Detroit and announced that he had come to build an electric street car line. He was backed by Frank E. Snow and other capitalists of Detroit. They selected Decatur because they believed it was the most promising city in the west. Mr. Snow and his associates were then developing motors and other electric equipment.

The new company naturally met opposition, even in the city council, but finally it secured a franchise and began building its line. The company, which was organized as the Decatur Electric Street Railway company, asked for franchise for a line from Lincoln square to the railroad station, by way of North Main and Cerro Gordo streets, and later for a line to Riverside and out North Edward street to the P. D. & E. (now Illinois Central, Peoria division).

A branch line was constructed out Pugh street (now West Grand avenue) to Walnut Grove avenue.

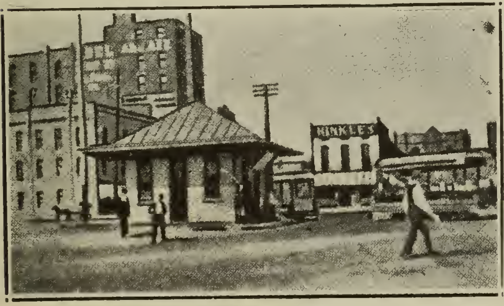
F. E. Snow was president and treasurer, E. J. Martin vice president, and A. Heurtley secretary the first year of the new company.

Mr. Martin called his line "the Short Line" and that name was generally used. Guy J. Parke was manager.

In 1891 the officers of the company were I. R. Mills president, F. E. Snow vice president, and W. H. Starr, secretary and treasurer. J. W. Alexander was general manager that year. The names are of local men but it was well understood that Detroit men interested in the electric industry were backers of the company.

After the new company entered the field, the Citizens Street Railway company decided it would electrify its line, and then began a merry race to see which company would be first with its new electric cars. The Citizens company managed to finish first, by a few weeks. The company inserted the word "electric" in its name.

For more than two years Decatur had two street car companies, but neither made any money, and finally in 1892, the two lines were consolidated. E. J. Martin left Decatur at that time. The new company, after the consolidation, was known as the City Electric Railway company. It erected Decatur's first transfer house on Lincoln square as a center for



FIRST TRANSFER HOUSE

transferring passengers. That building did duty until 1895, when the present transfer house was erected.

The street car business did not prove very profitable, and in September, 1899, the property was sold at auction to close out a receivership, the line going to D. S. Shellabarger, acting for the bondholders, himself and others. A new company was organized, taking the name of the Decatur Traction and Electric company. It extended the lines and made other improvements.

W. B. MC KINLEY BUYS

The stock of the Decatur Traction and Electric company was sold to the W. B. McKinley syndicate in July, 1903. Mr. McKinley had tried to get the property at the foreclosure sale in 1899. That year he bought out the Decatur Gas and Electric company of which G. C. Danforth was president. This company had been formed in 1898 by consolidation of the Decatur Gas Light and Coke company, the Decatur Electric company and the Culver Electric company.

W. A. Bixby, who had been managing this property since Jan. 1. 1900, for Mr. McKinley, took the management of the street car line in 1903 when Mr. McKinley bought it.

The Decatur Railway and Light company was incorporated Nov. 25, 1903. This was the company organized to manage all the McKinley properties here, including the new heating plant, which had been installed by the Decatur Gas and Electric company to sell heat from the plant on Edward and Cerro Gordo streets.

Following the purchase of street car lines in Danville in 1900 by the McKinley interests came the news that interurban lines connecting Central Illinois cities would be built.

The first line built out of Decatur by the Illinois Traction System, as the system was called, was the line to Springfield, on which service was started in September, 1904. The line to the north came next, the first service to Clinton being given in January, 1906. The line to Champaign was completed in June, 1907.

Within nine years from the time the building of interurban lines started, the Illinois

ILLINOIS TRACTION SYSTEM SHOPS

Traction System was operating 500 miles of track connecting Decatur, Bloomington, Danville, Peoria, Champaign-Urbana, and St. Louis, Mo. Besides these there were lines connecting LaSalle, Ottawa and other cities in the northern part of the state. The general manager of the Illinois Traction System was L. E. Fischer, now vice president and general manager of the Illinois Power and Light corporation. Mr. Fischer was in general charge while much of the development of the system was going on.

The Illinois Traction System located its car shops at Decatur, building a large plant at the northeast edge of the city in 1909 at a cost of more than $100,000.

On the first day of January, 1904, Merrill L. Harry began his duties as manager of the McKinley properties in Decatur. During the building of the interurban lines he had charge of much of the work in connection with their construction. In 1923 the McKinley properties were purchased by an organization now known as the Illinois Power and Light corporation. Under the new management Mr. Harry became Decatur division superintendent. In 1926 he was named general manager of the Central Illinois group of the I. P. L., which included Decatur, Clinton, Bloomington, Peoria, Jacksonville, Monticello, Champaign, Urbana and Danville. That position he held until his death Oct. 11, 1929.

Mr. Harry was succeeded in 1926 as Decatur division superintendent by Ira R. Abbott. E. W. Fowler of Ottawa, Ill., succeeded Mr. Harry as general manager of the Central Illinois group.

As the city grew, the street car system in Decatur underwent expansions. Its car and bus lines now cover all parts of the city. Twenty-four street cars and twenty-one motor buses are in use, buses having taken the place of cars on some streets. From the few thousands of passengers carried in 1883 the number of passengers increased to 6,500,000 in 1929. The electrical department of the I. P. L. has 19,000 customers, and the gas department 13,000.

CHAPTER LVII

LIGHTS AND TELEPHONES

DECATUR, like other cities, had its first sight of an electric light when the Barnum & Bailey circus visited the city, about 1880. It was one of the big hits of the circus.

This city was one of the pioneers in the introduction of electricity. It not only was the first in having electric street cars, but was among the first to have electric lights. In the early '80s the use of electricity was largely experimental for several years, but it was such a novelty that folks were willing to experiment.

"At last the electric light has made its appearance in Decatur," said a newspaper item Jan. 14, 1883. "Credit for its introduction belongs to Orendorff and Doyle and Sullivan of the Commercial block. For several days an expert has been in the city setting up the generator and making the necessary connections with the lamp which was placed in the Sullivan saloon. Trial was made last night and everything worked splendidly. The light was very brilliant, making the gas jets appear as sickly as a tallow candle in comparison. Each lamp costs $60. The generator costs $600."

A Fuller generator, operated by a Chicago expert, was used. A three horse power machine was manipulated by Fred Litterer. The newspapers stressed the fact that the light could be seen for a distance of six blocks, and a great crowd of people was there all evening to view the novel illumination. Mr. Doyle stated that it was his intention to make the electric light in the Commercial block a permanent thing.

The Commercial block is still standing, the block east of Short, on the north side of Eldorado.

In 1883 the Decatur Electric Light Co. got a franchise, and a plant was installed by the Fort Wayne Jenney Electric company in a one-story building on Wabash avenue. Only arc lights were used then. A few were installed in stores, but they were noisy, difficult to regulate, and uncertain.

S. T. Trowbridge was president and J. R. Mosser secretary of the Decatur Electric Light company. Its franchise was granted Oct. 1, 1883. The office was at the Trowbridge home, 207 West William. Dr. Trowbridge leased the building on Wabash avenue for the plant.

A fifty horse power engine was installed. Wires were run along the railroad east, and on North Franklin street south to the city park.

In October Kaufman and Bachrach arranged for a demonstration of Brush electric light, other business men joining them. "The time is near at hand when our people will demand the electric light", they said.

In reporting the demonstration a newspaper said:

"Establishments of Kaufman & Bachrach, O. E. Curtis & Company, L. L. Ferriss & Co., Louis Fleury, were brightly lighted by the new process. The generative machine was installed in H. W. Hill's place, Main and Church streets. The lamp at Fleury's lit up the old square for a considerable distance. Inside, the two arc lights made the room light as day."

At Cheap Charley's (Kaufman & Bachrach) there was one light inside and another outside.

This demonstration continued until after a fair in the tabernacle, and the light was used in the tabernacle. It gave promoters of the fair an added attraction.

"More music and more electric light tonight," they advertised.

Merchants also advertised the novelty. "The Newest Thing in Light" was the way Otto Curtis headed his jewelry store ad.

For a time it appeared as if Dr. Trowbridge's company were going to have opposition, for another company was formed and was granted a right of way through the streets. Incorporation papers were issued in October to the Citizens Electric Light and Power company, capital stock $25,000. Incorporators were John Ullrich, James Millikin, H. Shlaudeman, W. C. Johns, C. P. Housum, W. F. Busher, and W. L. Oakes. This company, however, later gave up the field to Dr. Trowbridge, who was getting his plant ready for operation.

J. M. Clokey took over the Wabash avenue plant in 1884 and ran it for two years.[1] If name had had anything to do with it, the business should have been a success, for it was conducted under the imposing title of the Decatur Jenney Electric Light and Power company. However, Mr. Clokey was kept busy answering protests from customers whose lights wouldn't function properly, and he breathed a sigh of relief when in about two years he had the opportunity to sell out the plant to the Decatur Gas Light and Coke company, which afterwards became the Decatur Gas and Electric company.

By 1885 electricity was being experimented with for street lighting, and again Decatur was ready to get in the front row in installing it. Not to be outdone by Danville, which, according to report, was preparing to erect light towers, Decatur prepared to do likewise.

Contract was made Oct. 17, 1885, with the Fort Wayne Jenney Electric company to install eight steel electric light towers, 125 feet high, and the equipment to run them. These towers were placed at various points about the city, and at the time lighted up the entire city. On each tower were five lamps. The lights in these towers were turned on for the first time Feb. 21, 1886. Decatur was one of very few cities to have such lights, and visitors to the city, as well as local citizens, considered them a wonder.[2] The equipment for running the lights was installed at the waterworks. For the installation of these towers and equipment the city paid $19,034.76.

As the city grew there was demand from outlying streets for lights. To meet the demand, one light was taken off each tower, and these single lights were installed at outlying street intersections. Later another light was taken from each tower for the same purpose, leaving only three lamps on the towers. As time went on these became unsatisfactory, and the drop lights at street corners were more and more in demand. By 1895 the city had more than 100 arc lights on the streets. Finally, in 1910, the towers were removed, arc lights having been installed all over the city.

In later years the city substituted incandescent lamps for the arc lights, completing the change in 1924.

Naturally with the introduction of electricity for lighting the city, the old gas lamps, which had done duty since 1868, were removed. There still remain in Decatur today several of the old iron posts which supported the lamps in the days when gas was used and a lamplighter lighted the lamps each night. One is at South Main and Macon, another at North and Union, and a third at William and Mercer streets.

By 1887 incandescent lights were coming into use. Frank Shlaudeman had set up a small experimental plant at the brewery. That year W. B. Burke was sent to Decatur by the Edison Engineering company of Chicago to install an incandescent light machine at the plant of the Decatur Gas Light and Coke company. He remained in Decatur as superintendent of the plant. It was a "300 light (each 16 candle power) plant", and was put into operation Feb. 2, 1888. Just by way of comparison, a conservative estimate of incandescents in use in Decatur today is 350,000, many of them much more than 16 candle power.

After the street car system in Decatur had been electrified, R. F. Piatt started in the light business, installing a generator in the car line's power house on East North street. He was bought out later by the Municipal Electric company, incorporated in 1892. J. H. Culver was president of the Municipal Electric company, and associated with him were E. E. Gibson and J. M. Willard. This company located a power house at Edward street and the Wabash railroad, and it was in use in 1893. Additions soon were necessary, due to increase in the demand for electric current.

This company later became the Culver Electric company, and in 1898 it was consolidated with the Decatur Gas Light and Coke company and the Decatur Electric company. The following year its property was purchased by the McKinley interests, which eventually sold to the Illinois Power and Light corporation.

THE TELEPHONE

Decatur had its first telephone service in 1879.

It was another novelty, and as usual citizens were experimenting with this new convenience.

Ever since Alexander G. Bell had exhibited his new contraption, called a telephone, in 1876 at the Centennial exposition in Philadelphia, where it had proved to be one of the big attractions (at 5 cents per), people all over the country had been experimenting with this "talkie" business. The small boy with his tin can, covered with tightly stretched skin, and his piece of string, was as busy as his elders. Students at Yale university constructed telephone lines from one dormitory to another.

Lowber Burrows, on his return from a visit to Yale, brought home a telephone instrument and set up a line from his home to the J. E. Bering house a half block away.

The first real telephone line in Decatur was put up by James W. Haworth connecting the downtown office of the Haworth company, at South Park and Water streets, with the factory on Cerro Gordo street. It was a nine days wonder, but as usual there were skeptics.

"What will that———fool do next?" scoffed many a bystander as the line was put up.

Newspaper announcement was made by J. H. Hutchins of the Western Union Telegraph company Aug. 20, 1879, that a telephone exchange would be established in the near future. It was expected the line would be in operation in thirty days, and subscribers were being secured. In October the installation of the line was completed.

It was a while before folks understood just how to make a telephone call. In announcing the completion of the line, the following statement was made in the newspaper:

"Many have the impression that in communicating through this telephone exchange the message has first to be given to Mr. Getty (Western Union telegraph agent), who then repeats it to the party with whom you wish to communicate, but this is not so. For instance, if the editor of The Review wishes to communicate with the Republican office, he would notify Mr. Getty of his desire. Mr. Getty notifies the Republican office of The Review's wish, and then connects the two offices with each other on his 'universal switch', and we proceed to talk to each other to our hearts' content, and Mr. Getty has no knowledge whatever of what we are talking about".

No. 1 on the first Bell telephone exchange was the grocery and bakery of Heilman, Imboden & Co., 211 North Water street. E. D. Bartholemew was No. 2. No. 3 was Sheriff W. W. Foster; No. 4, David Martin, and No. 5, C. P. Housum's residence. Subscribers' names and numbers were printed on a card, to be hung on the wall. By 1883 Decatur had 200 telephone subscribers.

From the time of the first telephone until 1893 the Bell Telephone company had the field to itself. Then a rival company appeared. In 1893 the Citizens Mutual Telephone company was incorporated and put up telephone lines. Its first officers were:

President—G. W. Scovill.
Vice-President—Orlando T. Kirk.
Secretary-Treasurer—John G. Harvey.

J. N. Donahey was the manager at first. Later C. S. Hankins became manager. The office was Room 33, Arcade office building.

The company was reorganized in 1899 as the Macon County Telephone company, with H. M. Whitmer as president, John Van Gundy as vice-president, W. P. Shade as treasurer and A. L. McNabb as secretary.

In 1907 reorganization again took place, and the company became the Decatur Home Telephone company, with J. W. Collins as president, Allen G. Hawley vice-president, Philip E. Kuhl treasurer, and Charles B. Cheadle secretary. The company in 1908 erected a building in the 200 Block North Main street.

This company installed the first automatic dial telephone system in Decatur, in 1909.

In 1917 the Decatur Home Telephone company was merged with the Central Union Telephone company, now known as the Illinois

Bell Telephone company. That company now has 13,000 local telephones and talking with either coast is easier than talking to one another in Decatur was forty-five years ago.

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[1] The first home in Decatur to be lighted with electricity was the home of J. M. Clokey, 247 East Wood street. At that time incandescent bulbs were known, but had not yet come into use generally. The bulbs were very expensive, costing $9 a dozen.

Mr. Clokey decided to give a surprise to Mrs. Clokey's guests, one night when she entertained her Cooking club. He had an electrician rig up temporary wiring on the first floor of the home, installing 40 or 50 light bulbs. When the lights were turned on, the first floor was a blaze of glory such as the guests had never seen before. They were astonished and delighted.

Among the guests on that occasion were J. K. Warren and B. K. Durfee of the Decatur Gas Light company. They agreed that the lighting was wonderful, but impractical. Mr. Clokey later sold the light plant to the Gas Light company, of which the two gentlemen named were officers.

[2] Erection of the towers brought a fresh cause for worry on the part of mothers of small boys. The youngsters considered it a great sport to climb the towers. Sometimes they got up too high, and couldn't get down without help.

CHAPTER LVIII

DECATUR IN THE '80s

DECATUR stepped out of the mud in the decade from 1880 to 1890. From that time on, she trod paved streets.

This was the period when the public square and down town business section changed from the country village to the modern city type. The old square, which had been a mudhole since the beginning of the city, and which had been a bone of contention for many years because of its filthiness, finally was paved.

Up to that time, the only thing in Decatur that might have been called a pavement was the cobblestone block on Merchant street and on East Prairie, from Main to Water, which had been put down in 1883, mostly at the expense of private citizens.

The paving of Lincoln square, which was of brick, was laid in 1884 as an experiment. Its cost was $7,296.

The city council did not get this work done without opposition. Business men and others protested. "Kicks" were being made right and left. But after it was down, people began to realize the benefit. Little opposition was expressed for future paving programs. The experiment was considered a success. Two years afterwards the city began a paving program, and since then hardly has a year gone by without seeing stretches of new paving laid.

In 1886 the council passed ordinance for the paving of nearly two miles of streets at a cost of $70,000. These streets included down town sections of North Main, Cerro Gordo, Franklin, Water, William, Morgan, and Eldorado.

In the year 1888 2.4 miles of pavement was laid at a cost of $78,000. The following year paving for 2.3 miles was laid at a cost of $80,000.

By 1890 Decatur had spent $300,000 on paving. This was all done during the regime of M. F. Kanan as mayor. All the first pavements laid here were of brick.

Official action was taken by the city council June 8, 1887, to name the old square "Lincoln Square."

Decatur had its first concrete sidewalks also in the early '80s.[1]

It also had its first passenger elevator. The elevator was installed in the Haworth building erected in 1883 at Water and North Park streets, the present site of the Citizens bank.

It was during the latter part of the decade from 1880 to 1890 that Decatur began to grow in earnest. During that period the population increased from 9,547 to 16,841, and most of that gain came during the last few years of the ten year period.

It was a period of civic activity, when extensive work in paving and sewer construction was done, when bigger and better buildings were erected, when much real estate development was brought about. New additions were laid out to the city, and were being built up.

Decatur was being widely advertised in those days. It was becoming known as a wide-awake, growing city. People were being attracted to it.

Another improvement which was fought vigorously at first was the sewer construction. In 1888 the ordinance was passed for the building of the Union street sewer. So great was the opposition that a mass meeting of citizens was called for Sept. 16 to make protest. In spite of that, however, the improvement went through. By 1890 the main sewers in the $250,000 sewer project outlined were installed. The Union street sewer ended just below Decatur street and from there followed a natural ditch to the river. The Broadway sewer, likewise, ended at Wood street.

A paid city fire department was organized in 1884. In 1888 the Morgan street firehouse was erected.

Other improvements which came were enlarging of the waterworks, and establishment of a city lighting system. Their stories are told in other chapters.

The Citizens Street Railway company was organized in 1883 and Decatur began getting real street car service. The old Priest line was discontinued. Free delivery of mail started in 1884.

Telephone service was being increased. In 1880 there had been just fifty-five telephones in use in the city. Lines were now being extended, however. In 1882 the line between Decatur and Springfield was installed.

Decatur had its first real city directory in 1883, and that brought about the beginning of the system of house numbering now in use. Decatur had had several city directories before this, but from the time C. O. Ebel came and compiled a directory in 1883, Decatur has had this record almost annually, a dependable volume which is a history of Decatur in itself.

In 1884 the Wabash railroad shops were moved to Decatur from Peoria. That was the beginning of the vast Wabash interests in Decatur today. That is our biggest industry.

The Decatur Coal company, which had been organized in 1881, sunk two coal shafts. It also had a mine at Niantic.

The Powers Opera house was started in 1888, and was opened in 1889.

Advance was being made in religious, social and school circles. Among the new churches erected were the English Lutheran on North Main street, the First Baptist on North Water street, German Methodist at Jackson and North streets, and St. Paul's German Lutheran on West Wood street.

In 1882 took place the great Harrison revival, which lasted twenty-one weeks and resulted in 2,000 professions of conversion.

In December, 1888, the Congregational church was organized. Rev. W. C. Miller was the first pastor.

The Decatur club was organized in 1883.

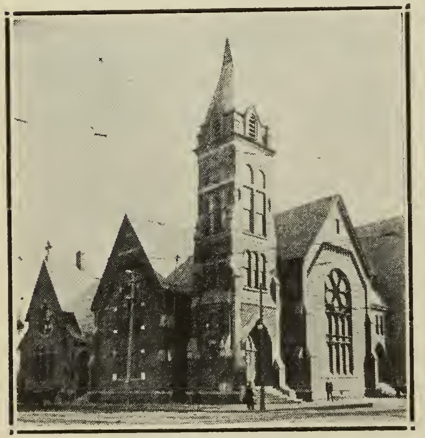
Oakland park was enjoying the height of its popularity, immense crowds gathering there for temperance and other big meetings.

Jasper and Marietta schools were erected in this period.

The State Grange held its annual meeting in Decatur in January, 1883.[2]

BUSINESS

New business enterprises were being started all over the city. Many of them are still in Decatur today. Among them are the Bachman Brothers furniture store, started in 1881; Bommersbach florist



FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH

ENGLISH LUTHERAN CHURCH

business, begun in 1881; Decatur Lumber company, started in 1888; R. S. Bohon store, opened about 1883; and the V. H. Parke and Son plant, established in 1887. V. H. Parke had come to Decatur in 1852 and first engaged in the livery business, then in the implement business, being the first exclusive implement dealer in Decatur.

Young Brothers and Maris in 1882 began a wholesale grocery business that for years supplied all Central Illinois.

In 1887 Spencer, Lehman & Co. began manufacturing and dealing in implements and vehicles. Reed Spencer of that firm lived to the age of ninety-four, passing away in August, 1930. The Spencer, Lehman & Co. was succeeded by the Tenney & Sikking company.

Other business enterprises started were Alexander, Westbay & Co., manufacturers of double knee hose; Prescott music house; John A. Keck company, box manufacturer; Bradley Brothers store; Scovill furniture store; George R. Bacon & Co., paper dealers; J. H. Bevans, book store; Decatur Iron Felloe Wagon company; Quinn and Seeforth, cigar manufacturers; Tait Brothers & Co., manufacturers of corn planters, check rowers, harrows and other machinery; and various others, like many named, leaders then, but now out of existence.

The Field and Wilson Plumbing company, which later became the Field, Shorb & Co., was started in 1885 by W. C. Field and Fred Wilson.

The Decatur Leader Manufacturing company plant, predecessor to the Leader Iron works, was established in 1888 by Davis Brown. It was incorporated as the Leader Iron works in 1903, the plant having been purchased by W. C. Field, W. A. Shorb and others. In 1904 the company bought land in the northeast section of Decatur

GARFIELD MEMORIAL

and erected a new plant. The old plant was located south of Fairview park, in what is now Park Place.

It was during the '80s that the check rower industry in Decatur was at its height. Other factories were flourishing. Much of the advertising which Decatur was receiving in those days was due to its successful manufacturing establishments, which were sending their products all over the country.

On Sept. 27, 1881, Decatur did homage to President James A. Garfield, whose death had resulted from an assassin's bullet. Memorial services were held in Central park at the same time the funeral was taking place in Cleveland, O. Buildings were draped in mourning; flags were at half mast. From 12:30 to 1:30 bells were tolled. To duplicate the scene at the funeral a catafalque was constructed, bearing a draped casket, and drawn by four black horses belonging to J. B. Bullard, undertaker. A picture of the catafalque was taken on Lincoln square, at that time covered with grass.

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[1] Some of that first sidewalk, in front of the old J. W. Haworth home, at Jackson and Eldorado, did duty for fifty years. About that first walk hangs an interesting tale.

The Haworths hired men from Chicago to lay that walk, which was put down in checkerboard style. The man in charge called himself "engineer of construction" and assumed an air of great importance. Being the first work of the kind in the city, it attracted much attention. Spectators were numerous. To the onlooker the greatest wonder was—how did they harden the concrete, after it was laid?

That gave the "engineer of construction" his chance to look wise and mysterious. When asked as to the hardening process, he refused information. Not for all the world would he give up his secret—it was worth millions to him. So the onlookers kept on wondering.

David Martin and Sullivan Burgess wanted to find out, but saw no chance to learn anything from the high-hat "engineer". One day they mentioned the subject to John Grass. And John Grass laughed.

"That concrete can't help but harden when it is made wet," he said. "If there's any secret, it would be how to keep it from hardening."

Martin was skeptical, and asked Grass to try an experiment. If Grass would do the work, Martin would furnish the material for a walk. Burgess contributed his share to the bargain by agreeing to allow them the privilege (?) of putting their experimental walk in front of his home on Morgan street.

So Martin provided the cement, gravel and sand, and Mr. Grass went to work. Martin and Burgess insisted on the same checkerboard style of the Haworths. When Mr. Grass was through, there was a walk, just as good as the Haworths. And the Haworths had paid 30 cents a square foot for theirs!

Mr. Grass was the hero of the day. The "secret" had been discovered, and there was no secret to it. Cement walks had been introduced, and Decatur has been laying them ever since. Naturally Grass had all the business he could handle. In fact, he kept on laying cement walks until his death.

The first cement walk laid inside of a yard was at the George S. Durfee home at Main and Cerro Gordo streets. This was the first walk laid off in squares.

[2] The State Grange had met in Decatur before, in 1877, and one of the babies born in Decatur while the meeting was in progress was "Jimmy" Laux. It was suggested that he be named after James Golder, who was grand master of the Grange at that time. That name was given him, and the old gentleman was so pleased that he gave the parents, Mr. and Mrs. Charles Laux, a valuable gift for the child.

Mention of this fact was made at the meeting in 1883, and Master Jimmy Laux was placed on a table and presented with a handsome silver cup, also a pocketbook filled with coins.

CHAPTER LIX

THE COLORED PEOPLE

BEN BERKSHIRE, who came to Macon county in 1834 with James Geddes and John Sawyer, was the first colored resident of the county. He had no surname, the name, Berkshire, being used after he came here. Black Ben, as he was called, had a disfigured hand, caused by having been burned by his master, when he was a slave, either as a punishment or mark of identification. He may have been running away from his master at the time he was picked up by the two men, Geddes and Sawyer, who brought him along to Macon county.

Ben remained with Geddes until Geddes married; then he lived alone in a cabin that stood on a bluff near the river. It is the hill which stands on the west side of the lake, south of the hard road near the William street bridge.

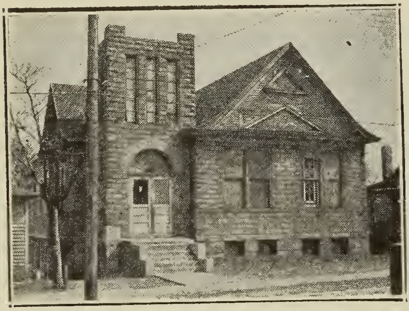
That was his home until the time came when he was unable to care for himself and he was then taken to the county farm, where he died. He made his living by selling berries, fruits, game, and fish, raising hogs, making and selling medicine. He gained a good reputation as a hunter and as a cook and he was taken along on many hunting parties.

Dalton Stewart was the second man in the county called colored. He was not a negro, being the son of a Choctaw Indian and a German girl, but he married a colored woman, and chose to be considered a member of that race. When Stewart was one day old, he and his mother were stolen away by Germans who raided the Indian camp, and the mother died. He lived in the German settlement until he was seven years old, then was taken by his father to an Indian settlement, at Wood River, Ill. At the time of the Mexican war he was taken along with Colonel John J. Hardin's regiment and was with the army during that war.

After that Stewart spent five years in the west and northwest among the Indians, as interpreter for the Choteau Fur Trading company. On his return he went to Springfield and there he was janitor of the law office of Lincoln and Herndon and was employed at a barber shop, where he often shaved Abraham Lincoln.

He bought a barber shop and went into business in Decatur Feb.

21, 1853, bringing with him Steve Stewart, who was the first colored man in the city of Decatur and the second in the county.



ANTIOCH BAPTIST CHURCH

Dalton Stewart's wife, who had been Mary Dixon of Springfield, was the first colored woman to come to Decatur to live.

Dalton Stewart had no education in his youth but he was anxious to learn and he borrowed books and studied. He was a charter member of the Decatur lodge of colored Masons, and was sometimes called the father of the lodge. He was a charter member also of the colored Odd Fellows lodge in Decatur. He was energetic, educated his children, and was a dependable citizen.[1] Finally old age overtook him, he was unable to work, he lost his little home, and, despondent over his lack of support and inability to make a living, he took his own life Sept. 19, 1913.

A few other colored people came to Decatur before the Civil war. They were free persons. After the war colored people began coming in larger numbers.

In 1857 the Antioch Baptist church was organized with fourteen members. Rev. Mr. Reasoner was the first pastor. The ground for a church building was donated by Captain David L. Allen. The first building erected stood a little east of the present one. In this building the colored children first went to school. The church structure now in use was built in 1907 when Rev. A. J. Crockett was pastor.

St. Peter's African Methodist church was organized in 1863 by Elder F. Meyer. The organization took place in the Masonic temple building which stood on the present site of the Citizens National bank. Charles S. Jacobs was the leader in the movement to organize.

For about two years services were held at different places. Captain Allen offered to give two lots for a building, with the restriction that no debt ever be placed upon the land and that if used for any

ST. PETER'S A. M. E. CHURCH

other purpose it would revert to the Allen estate. In order to get a clear title, the church purchased the ground, and a church building was erected in 1865. That building burned down. Three other buildings have been erected since. The present church on the west side of Greenwood avenue was erected in 1927. Rev. J. H. Sydes started the building fund, Rev. I. M. D. Washington added to it, and Rev. R. H. Hackley completed the building project.

On the first board of trustees, elected in 1864, were George Winston, Larkin Kindred and Charles S. Jacobs. When the first church was built the basement was fitted up for school purposes, and school was moved there from the Antioch Baptist church. It was continued at that place until 1874 when colored children were admitted to the public schools.

In recent years several churches of other denominations have been organized among the colored people.

Colored Masons organized a lodge here July 15, 1874, officers of the Springfield lodge being in charge. The organization took place in the old Masonic building. The first officers were: Isaac Rogan, W. M.; Gilbert Vernon, S. W.; and Peter White, J. W. The lodge used rented rooms until it purchased the house at 251 East Macon street in September, 1928.

The Odd Fellows lodge was organized Sept. 29, 1882, by officers of the Lincoln lodge. The first officers were: J. W. Woodford, H. Singleton, Dalton Stewart, Louis Stewart, W. H. Price, Henry Wells, Stanton Fields and M. S. Randolph.

The colored people also have a strong Knights of Pythias order. It was reorganized in 1906, M. F. Mumphus being named chancellor commander.

St. Francis Court, Heroines of Jericho, was organized in 1878. Mrs. Cornelia Hollinger was the first most ancient matron.

The Household of Ruth was organized in 1882. Mrs. Barbara Rhodes was the first most noble governor.

Several other lodges have been organized by the colored people.

Decatur has a branch of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People. Included in its membership are both white and colored people. Rev. E. M. Antrim, then pastor of the First Methodist church, was the first local president and Mrs. Lillian Buster, secretary. It has taken part in untangling differences and promoting good fellowship between the races.

The Big Sisters club has done much charity work since it was started in 1908 by Mrs. Lillian Jameson.

Isaac Rogan was the first colored man to be a member of the board of supervisors of Macon county. He was an influential man, and was active in St. Peter's church.

James Hollinger, who came to Decatur in 1862, served on the board of supervisors for fourteen years. He was a barber by trade, and was active in local politics.

Houston Singleton for forty years ran a restaurant on Lincoln square, served on the board of supervisors twelve years, was a prominent Mason, and was active in politics. He purchased the building in which he had his restaurant and when it burned he erected a new one to take its place. He also built a handsome home at the north edge of the city.

Cook Long was elected to the board of supervisors in 1920 but his death occurred the same year. Mr. Singleton took his place. Following Mr. Singleton's death Dr. J. C. Ellis became supervisor.

Seven colored men have served on the police force. They were: John Williamson, who served twenty-one years; Thomas Miller, John Moore, W. C. King, Shadrick Kemp, who served fourteen years; Monroe Denny and Charles C. Johnson.

Wayman Wilkerson, who lived in Decatur a number of years and who was a deputy sheriff for four years, later became a banker and undertaker at Memphis, Tenn.

Louis Stewart, son of Dalton Stewart, was the first colored man to be employed in federal service. He was a postman for thirty-two years. Baker Nickens was the second in federal service. He served as mail carrier for ten years or more. Carl Watkins, W. H. Hammons and J. Harry Johnson were other colored men who became mail carriers.

SOLDIERS

Decatur has furnished a number of soldiers from the ranks of colored people. Many men who fought in the Civil war have lived in Decatur, but there is record of only two having enlisted from here. They were John Bird and Richard (Dock) Steward.

In the Spanish-American war and in the World war colored men went from here to serve in the army.

During the World war ten or twelve colored men were in the Eighth Illinois, later the Three Hundred Seventieth U. S. infantry, which saw service in France and which was one of four negro regiments to receive the Croix de Guerre award from the French military authorities for heroism.

Harry Pearson of the Three Hundred Seventieth and Joel Motley of the Three Hundred Sixty-seventh, both of Decatur, were among those receiving individual citations for bravery.

Harry Warfield was the first colored Decatur youth to die in France in the World war and the American Legion post made up of colored men was named for him.

Decatur has had several colored physicians, Dr. Majors being the first. Later came Dr. H. C. Ganaway, who was killed in an I. T. S. wreck at Staunton in 1910; Dr. Harry Buster, Dr. Luke Parker and Dr. J. C. Ellis.

Dr. Stephen Duncan, dentist, located here about 1921, but left owing to ill health. Dr. Clarence Allen was the next colored dentist, but he remained only two years. The third colored dentist here was Dr. Francis C. Rogan, who has been practicing here since 1925.

Dr. George E. Lee, chiropodist, has had an office here for a number of years, first in the Rodgers shoe store and now in the Standard Life building.

Robert R. Rogan was first colored boy graduate from Decatur high school. That was in 1882. Laura White was first colored girl graduate.

Since then many colored students have graduated, and many of them have won high places in their chosen lines of work. Some who have attended James Millikin university have won honors there. Edwin Sheen, '25, was an honor student each year of his course there and won the University of Illinois scholarship, receiving his A. M. degree from that school in 1926.

Gradually the number of business concerns run by colored people has increased. In factories and other industries they are attaining better positions. As a race they are putting the hardships of the past behind them and reaching upward to a higher goal.

So far in this chapter most space has been given to men—their achievements in politics, business and other ways. Some reference should be made to women, but space does not permit specific reference. Many colored women have long been known for their faithful, helpful, kindly service, much of it inspired by loving hearts and given for small reward. Some of these women, as well as many more men, are spoken of somewhat in detail in a history of the colored people of Decatur written by Mrs. Marie Gray Baker in 1929, the history from which the material for this chapter is taken.

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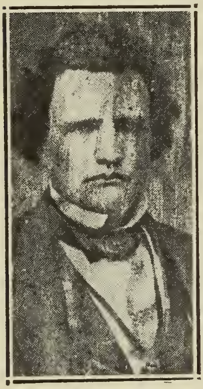
[1] Dalton Stewart had the distinction of being the first colored man in Decatur to cast a vote after the 15th Amendment went into effect. The occasion was more or less notable. Stewart and Dr. George W. McMillan, an Old Hickory Democrat, locked arms and went to the polls in the old court house, and cast their ballots.

CHAPTER LX

GAVE TWICE ONE FORTUNE

TO receive the same fortune twice is an experience that rarely happens, but that was the good luck of Illinois Wesleyan university at Bloomington, Ill., due to the philanthropy of two of Decatur's most interesting citizens, Rev. and Mrs. Hiram Buck. Their name is perpetuated in the Buck Memorial library of that institution.


REV. HIRAM BUCK

Hiram Buck, presiding elder of the Methodist Episcopal church, was a resident of Decatur thirty-two years. Mr. Buck joined the Illinois Methodist Conference in 1843, and served in the ministry for fifty years, most of the time as a presiding elder. A man of wide influence, a church leader, an able organizer, he was honored both in the Methodist church and outside.

Elder Buck was one of the founders and incorporators of Illinois Wesleyan university at Bloomington in 1853, and was a member of its board for the rest of his life. When he passed away, his wife took his place on the board. The university was always near to his heart, and some time before his death he gave the institution a half section of land to be used as endowment. Some time later the school was badly in need of money, and asked the consent of Mrs. Buck to sell the land. She advised against it, realizing that the land was increasing in value, but so badly was money needed by the school that she gave her approval. When the land was put up for sale, she was not satisfied with the price offered, so she bought back the land herself. By this deal the university came into possession of $60,000.

About three years before her death Mrs. Buck made an offer to Wesleyan to give the school all her property at her death, on condition that $325,000 be raised to pay off existing debts on the school. Mrs. Buck at that time owned nearly 1,000 acres of land in Douglas county, valued at $200,000 to $250,000. She stipulated that $200,000 was to go for a library building at Wesleyan.

The requirement as to raising the $325,000 was met by the citizens of Bloomington and Normal, and the Methodist church, and as a result Wesleyan within a few years had its beautiful new Buck Memorial library. It was dedicated in 1923.

Mr. Buck had acquired his extensive land holdings about the time of the Civil war or before, when land could still be had at $1.25 an acre. Its rise in value made him a rich man, and his wife, knowing his life-long interest in Wesleyan, realized that it would be his wish that the university profit by it after her death.

A PIONEER

Mrs. Buck was one of the pioneers of Douglas county. Her maiden name was Martha Hammet, and she came to Douglas county with her parents when she was three years old. For seven weeks the family lived in a tent, then in a squatter's cabin, without floor or chimney, and with not even the cracks between the logs chinked. In later years Mrs. Buck spoke of the days of her childhood, when there were no mills, no schools, no roads, no churches, when Indians frequently visited them and were so curious about the white "papoose" of the family that her mother feared they might carry the baby off.

Mr. and Mrs. Buck were married in 1846. She was a strong, capable woman. Mr. Buck, who was a man of striking personality, was fond of horses, and delighted in a good horse race. It was a familiar sight to see him going about the city mounted on horseback.

Mr. Buck passed away in 1892 and Mrs. Buck in 1918.

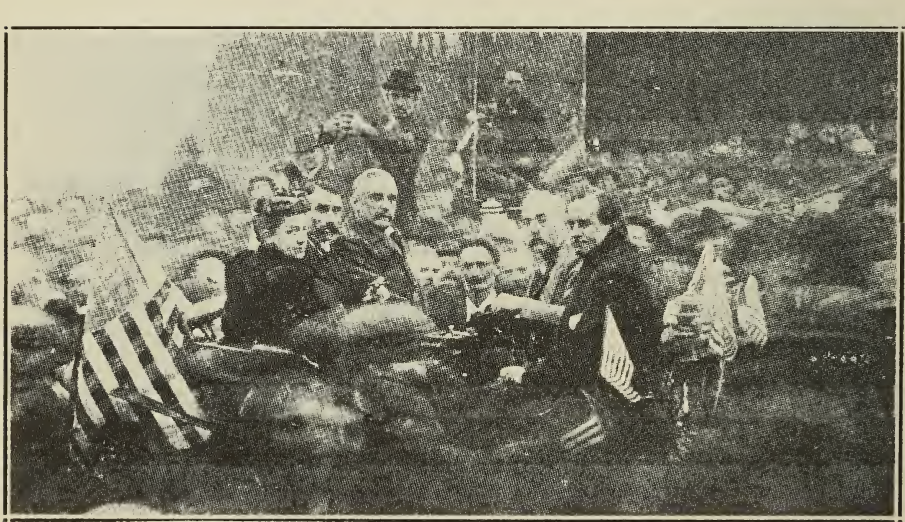
CHAPTER LXI

DISTINGUISHED VISITORS

MACON county always welcomes its distinguished visitors. Bryan day, Oct. 23, 1896, became a sort of gauge by which to measure crowds in Decatur. It probably drew more people from out of the city than any occasion before or since that time.

It was estimated that 30,000 people came from outside Decatur. Special trains were run into the city from various points and all regular trains carried special coaches. One special train, from Vandalia, carrying 1,500 people, was delayed and arrived too late to participate in the parade. To save further delay, passengers left the train at the Wood street crossing.

About a dozen bands were here from other cities and took part in the parade. The procession, which took place in the morning, was the first event of the day. Floats, bands, wagons, carriages, people carrying flags and wild with enthusiasm over the visit of William J. Bryan, candidate for president of the United States, made the parade a gay and colorful event.



WILLIAM J. BRYAN IN DECATUR
Left to right—Mrs. Bryan, Mr. Bryan's secretary, M. C. Irish, Oscar Mueller (below), H. Mueller, Mr. Bryan.

The special train which brought Mr. Bryan came over the P. D. and E. It made a stop at Eldorado street, where a committee of 150 met the distinguished guest. Hieronymus Mueller's motor wagon was there to transport Mr. Bryan to Central park. In the motor wagon with him rode Mr. Mueller and his son, Oscar, M. C. Irish, Mrs. Bryan, and Mr. Bryan's secretary.

When the car reached Central park, the crowd was so dense that it was impossible for Mr. Bryan to get from the car to the stand which had been built for the occasion. Hence, he stood up and gave his speech from the motor wagon. The car went on to Lincoln square, where Mr. Bryan spoke again. Another surging mass of humanity filled the streets there.

That motor wagon, by the way, attracted no small amount of attention in itself. Remember, it was Decatur's first and Decatur thought it was showing no small honor to the presidential candidate to provide the new type of vehicle to convey him from the station. Mr. Bryan also was duly impressed. It was his first ride in an automobile.

From Lincoln square Mr. Bryan was taken north to the Wabash crossing where his train was waiting. He made a few remarks as he boarded the train, saying he was sorry it was impossible to shake hands with every one.

Mr. Bryan spoke in Decatur a number of times, but never did he have the reception which was given him during the campaign of 1896. Twice he appeared at chautauquas, on Aug. 25, 1909, at Wilson park (now Faries park) and in 1921 at Woodbine park (now Camp Seymour). He was here on other occasions, also.

GRANT REUNION

One of Decatur's big days was the occasion of the visit of General U. S. Grant, when he was the guest of honor at the reunion of the Macon County Veterans association and the Twenty-first Illinois Regiment, commonly known as Grant's Regiment. It was held on Oct. 6-7, 1880.

A salute of forty-six guns awakened the people the first day of the reunion. Grant and his party were met at the station by a big crowd, including military organizations, bands, committees and citizens. During his stay here General Grant was entertained at the home of Richard J. Oglesby.

That night a big meeting was held at the tabernacle, at which the speakers were General Grant, General John A. Logan, General R. J.

Oglesby and General J. H. Moore. Business of the organizations in charge of the reunion was transacted at this session.

The next day the reunion proper was held at the fair grounds (now Fairview park) and thousands of people gathered there. It was called Camp Sheridan for the day. Various bands were present and furnished concerts. Drills were given by veterans and by National Guards, and there were speeches and various other entertainment features. Among the speakers that day was General Gus A. Smith.

At night a public reception was held in the tabernacle and again crowds swarmed to the place to get the opportunity to see and to hear and to meet General Grant.

Among the things said by General Grant on the occasion of this reunion was that he hoped all sectional strife would soon be wiped out in the country and that the people would vie with each other in upholding the flag. He was confident that it would be done and the day would come when one would hear nothing about sections.

Grant was accompanied to Decatur by General and Mrs. Logan, and by his son, Jesse Grant.

WILLIAM H. TAFT

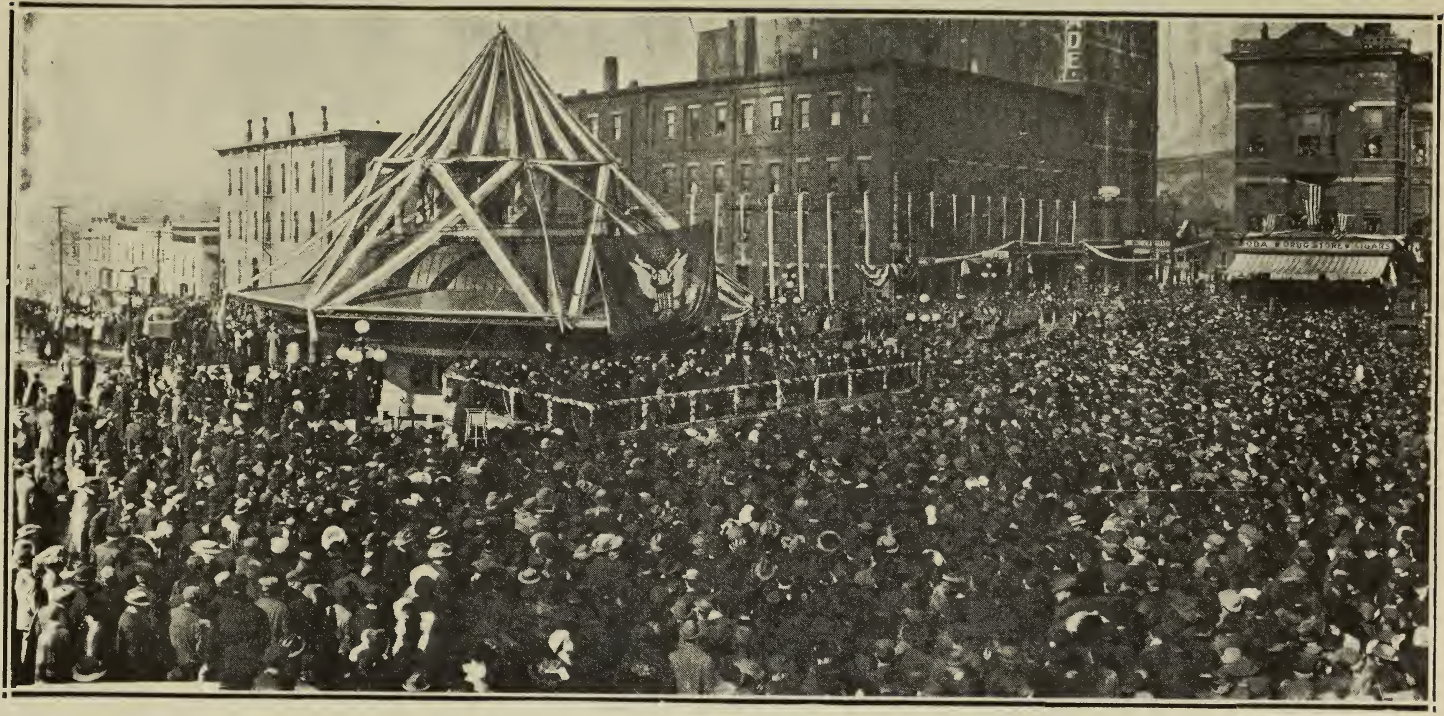
Crowds jammed Lincoln square and the James Millikin university in 1911, when President William Howard Taft honored the city with his presence and gave two eloquent addresses.

He was here on Feb. 11, and the theme of his address was "Reciprocity", the prevailing topic of discussion at the time. At the transfer house a speaker's stand had been erected, and from it President Taft addressed the enthusiastic thousands who packed the square. Hon. W. B. McKinley was with the president, who in his speech commended the work of Congressman McKinley.

ROOSEVELT AT J. M. U. DEDICATION
At the right can be seen Robert I. Hunt. Next is Wilson M. Bering. Beyond him in rear is George W. Mueller.

THEODORE ROOSEVELT

Hon. Theodore Roosevelt was a Decatur visitor several times, one time



WILLIAM H. TAFT SPEAKING IN LINCOLN SQUARE while president of the United States. At that time he gave the dedicatory address at the dedication of the James Millikin university June 4, 1903. On that day he spoke also at the Wabash station before his train left.

WILLIAM MCKINLEY

President William McKinley stopped in Decatur in the fall of 1898 while touring the country following the close of the Spanish-American war. He was greeted at the railroad station by a crowd of people, and spoke to them for about five minutes from a flat car. Among those in his party on that occasion were Secretary of the Treasury Lyman J. Gage, Senator Shelby M. Cullom and Governor John R. Tanner.

RUTHERFORD B. HAYES

Decatur entertained a distinguished visitor on Oct. 31, 1880, when President Rutherford B. Hayes and party passed through the city. A stop was made at the station for a few moments, and many folks had the opportunity to see the president.

POLITICAL GATHERINGS

Political campaigns have brought together many big crowds in this city. One of the largest gatherings in the '80s was in 1884 when Carter Harrison was here in the interests of his candidacy for governor.

DEBATE

In 1866 20,000 people was a big crowd for Decatur, but that many enthusiastic folks got together in the fall of that year in the grove south of town to hear General John A. Logan and Colonel T. Lyle Dickey, candidates for congressman-at-large, debate. Wagons, loaded with men, women and children, and with the national colors flying, poured into Decatur that October day to hear the two men argue politics. Women adorned themselves with sashes of red, white and blue. Horses and vehicles carried the national colors. It was a gala day.

General Logan denied emphatically the rumor that he had raised a regiment in southern Illinois for rebel service in the war, which he had been accused of doing. Dickey didn't let the opportunity pass to accuse his opponent of disloyalty. So the battle of words went on. Each candidate had his friends and his foes on that occasion.

ONE FALSE

One visitor, to whom Decatur accorded honors, was sailing under false pretenses, it was afterwards learned. For other fraudulent acts he spent many years in prison.

That man was Dr. Frederick A. Cook, who claimed the honor of discovering the North Pole. He passed through Decatur on Oct. 8, 1909, enroute from St. Louis to Chicago. The train stopped at the West Main crossing to take President A. R. Taylor of the university on board. Dr. Cook stood on the rear platform and smiled and bowed to the crowd gathered there. When he reached the Wabash station thousands were there to greet him and he made a brief talk, saying that "it was well worth while going to the pole and suffering hardships to do so, to get such a greeting".

It was only a few days after this, that Robert E. Peary submitted his proofs that Dr. Cook had never reached the North Pole.

CHAPTER LXII

SOME DECATUR LANDMARKS

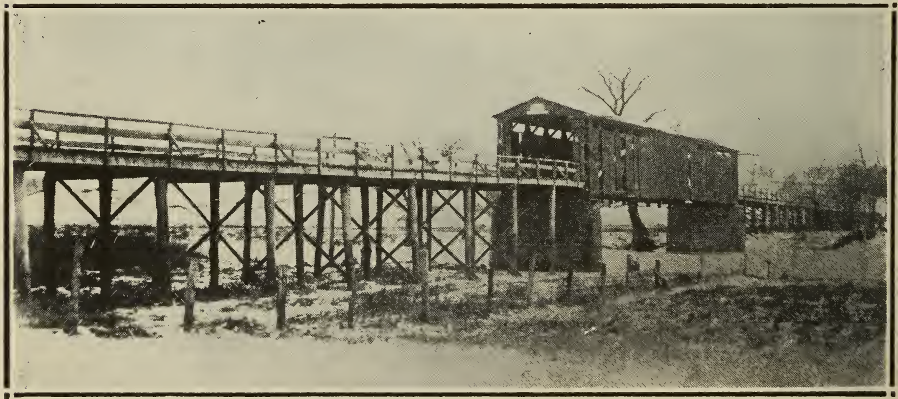
DECATUR has left few reminders of the early days, but some remained until comparatively recent years and are still remembered by many citizens.

The old covered bridge, the type that now has almost entirely disappeared, crossed the Sangamon where the county bridge now crosses the lake near the impounding dam. It was probably the first bridge built in the county, for it was on an important road, the road to Shelbyville, which intersected the old Springfield-Paris road south of Decatur. All travel from the south, the east or the west, came by these roads. No doubt Abraham Lincoln crossed the Sangamon, at the point where the old covered bridge afterwards was built, when he came to Macon county in 1830.

The exact year of its erection is not known, but it stood for nearly sixty years. It was a good bridge in its day, and though built of wood, outlasted many iron bridges.

The old bridge was replaced by a new bridge in 1913. The new bridge was raised 14 feet and new approaches built, in 1921, when Lake Decatur was formed.

One time in 1880, when the old county bridge was closed to teams, for repairs, the farmers had no way to cross the river, and Captain David L. Allen made repairs on his old ferry boat to put into use for the benefit of the farmers until the bridge was reopened.



OLD COVERED BRIDGE

CAPTAIN ALLEN HOME

The last home of Captain David L. Allen on the bluff at Allen's bend of the Sangamon stood for years after the death of Captain Allen to remind one of the genial old gentleman who did so much for Decatur. With its eight sided tower lifting its head above it, the building never failed to attract attention. It was near where the Mueller lodge now is. Capt. Allen bought the original 40 acres of his land along the river, in 1865, and later he erected the house in which he spent his declining years, having disposed of his house on the east side of Water street, north of North.

ALLEN'S HOME AT ALLEN'S BEND

The Muellers bought the last of the Allen estate (then about 70 acres) after Laura, daughter of Captain Allen, died. That was the beginning of the Mueller holdings south of the river.

Captain Allen built the octagonal tower, it was said, for an apiary.

Allen's bend in the river is no more, since the creation of the lake, but mention of it brings to many the memory of moonlight boat rides on the quiet waters of the Sangamon.

DRUG STORE CORNER

One of Decatur's landmarks is the store building now occupied by West's drug store. That corner has been the location of a drug store since away back in the '40s.

In the building which first occupied that corner William Cantrill established a general store in 1833.

WEST DRUG STORE CORNER

He was there until 1844, and during several years of that time served as postmaster. In 1844 Crissey & Deffenbach established a drug store there. Mr. Crissey later became the sole owner, and moved his stock to another location. Then a tailor shop occupied the room. Herbert & Potter, physicians, had their office there next, and they were followed by Dr. Baldwin.

In 1852 Dr. James F. Roberts established a drug store on the corner, and a drug store has been there ever since. He bought the site from William Prather May 19, 1857, and in 1861 erected the brick building which still stands. Dr. Roberts ran the store many years, then sold to W. C. Armstrong, who, in turn, sold to E. A. West, the present proprietor, in 1892. Three proprietors in a period of seventy-eight years is remarkable.

The Roberts store became a general meeting place. Mr. Roberts was jolly and affable and made many friends. The store for many years had an outside stairway with balcony at the second floor, and from this balcony war bulletins, proclamations and announcements of any public nature were made. Lowber Burrows read most of the Civil war dispatches. Sometimes John Moreland, court crier, took his place. It was literally true that Moreland could be heard all over town, for he had a big voice and the town wasn't very large.

For many years all levels in the city were taken from the door sill of the West drug store. Engineers set their instruments on the iron door sill at the front of the building, when they wanted to take levels for street grading and paving.

The old iron stairway and balcony were removed in 1912.

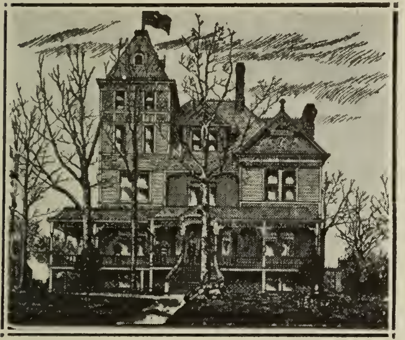
Mr. West has in his possession an old prescription book used in the store in years gone by. Prescriptions for some of the leading business men of the city appear in that book. Among them are the following:

Ayers LeForgee's Hair Tonic.
Dinges Blood Purifier.
Dingman's Diarrhea Medicine.
Powers Liniment.
Warnick's Liniment.
O. B. Gorin's Pills.
Cologne for Mueller.
Dr. Parker's Cholera Remedy.
Packard's Eye Wash.
Brown Dye for Mr. Millikin.

CASSELL'S CASTLE

Cassell's Castle on Cassell's hill, long a landmark in Decatur, was erected in 1886 by Berry H. Cassell. It contained twenty-two rooms, finished in hardwood, and was one of the finest homes in the neighborhood. It stood on the hill between the Illinois Central railroad and Hilton street, near Prairie, which now contains a huge I. P. L. gas tank.

It was on the site of this residence that Richard J. Oglesby made his first political speech in 1842. The occasion was a Fourth of July celebration and Oglesby was one of the orators of the day. Henry Elliott read the Declaration of Independence. The hill at that time was covered with trees.



CASSELL'S CASTLE

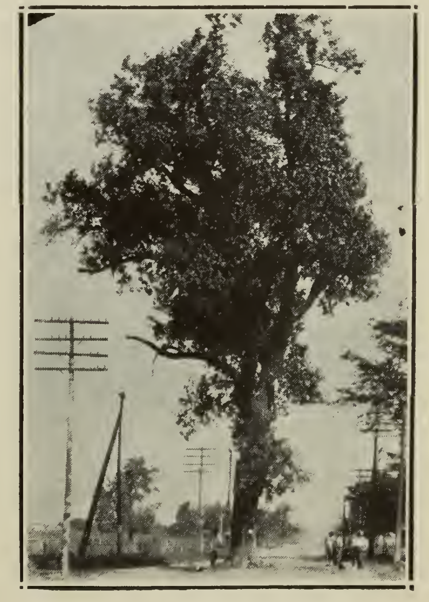
The Cassell house was destroyed by fire in 1915, and was not rebuilt.

COTTONWOOD TREE

Most everyone remembers the old cottonwood tree which stood in the middle of the Bloomington road, in front of the William Downing homestead north of Decatur. Several times it came near getting the ax, but each time Mr. Downing and other residents made such protests that the tree was saved. However, finally in 1916, when the road became a state aid road, and state authorities ordered its removal, the tree had to go. It was then nearly 100 years old.

The tree was valued not only because of early day recollections, but because it was used to reckon distances. It was just exactly two miles north of the court house. It stood on the north and south section line, and only a few feet off the east and west section line.

The earliest residents of thè county said the tree was there when they came, but it was then only a sapling. Parmenius Smallwood, who came in 1829, settled on the land on which the tree stood. There was no road there then, and one day a teamster drove astraddle the tree and bent it. Mr. Smallwood then decided to build a little fence around the tree and save it from further damage. The fence stood for many years, until the tree was big enough to need no such protection.



THE BIG TREE

T. J. Braden said that his father had brought the rails from the timber to build the fence around the tree.

When the Bloomington road was laid out, the tree was in the center of the road, but the people of that vicinity wanted the tree saved and it was allowed to stand. They considered it a benefit instead of an obstruction to traffic. Dozens of times on a hot day, travelers on the road stopped to rest their teams and themselves in its cooling shade.

Sentiment had to give way when the road was graded for the state aid improvement in 1916, and Bloomington road travelers finally lost their old friend.

COULTER'S MILL

Coulter's Mill, about ten miles northeast of Decatur on the Sangamon river, has been a favorite spot for many years for the fisherman. The ground around the mill is admirably situated for camping purposes, and the fish in the river right there are just waiting to bite, it seems. At least that is the place where everybody has gone for years to catch the finny tribe.

The mill was owned by the Coulter family for more than forty years. The land was bought by William Coulter from a man named Garrett in 1874, and Mr. Coulter proceeded to erect a mill. It was a three story building, run at first by water power. Years afterwards the mill was moved to higher ground, as its timbers were rotting away. After the change, gasoline power was used. Mr. Coulter ran the mill for thirty-three years, then moved to Oklahoma, and his son-in-law, Simon Mayberry, continued to run it until 1913. The mill was designed for wheat grinding, but afterwards ground mostly corn and buckwheat. T. A. Gooch bought the place in 1914. Mr. Coulter died in Guymon, Okla., in 1912.

COULTER'S MILL
Showing old dam, also old water wheel which furnished power for grinding.

COLLEGE HILL

If you went to see the circus in the early days of Decatur, you usually went to the Mound, called College hill, the present site of the A. E. Staley and C. E. England homes. Before any homes were built on that hill, the summit of it was much higher than it is today. Considerable ground was taken off when the houses were erected.

For many years the hill was used as public property. There the Civil war companies met to organize. Children used it for a playground. Once a big tabernacle was erected for the state Sunday school convention.

At one time Rev. William S. Crissey had made an attempt to secure a college in Decatur, and he offered the Mound as the site for it. The effort to secure the institution failed. Provision was made in the offer of Rev. Mr. Crissey that buildings be erected within ten years. No one was particularly interested in the idea and the ground was not considered a very desirable site, so the offer went unheeded. Rev. Mr. Crissey had laid out the square about 1840.

After the effort to get a school established had failed, Rev. Mr. Crissey bequeathed the property to the Missionary society of the Methodist Episcopal church of Illinois. There was no such society, and the property reverted to the heirs.

It was this effort to start a college which gave the hill the name of College hill.

The houses on the hill were erected in the early '80s by William B. Chambers and William J. Quinlan, both members of the firm of Chambers, Bering & Quinlan. The finest of wood was used in the houses and they were well built. The Quinlan house cost $28,000. These two houses were among the best and handsomest in the city at the time they were erected. Today, after being remodeled and improved, the same can be said of them.

The Quinlan home was sold in 1891 to William H. Ennis who lived there some years. In 1913 it was bought by A. E. Staley, the present occupant. The Chambers home was sold about 1886 to Silas Packard, who lived there until his death. Afterwards, in 1915, the property was bought by J. T. Whitley, who in turn sold it to the present owner, C. E. England.

IMBODEN SPRINGS

In the early '60s John Imboden bought a tract of twelve acres south and west of the old square, and built a slaughter house thereon. It was necessary to have water and so he hired a well digger to dig him a well.

The digging for the well had progressed to a depth of 30 feet without striking anything out of the ordinary. One evening the well diggers knocked off work as usual. The next morning when they went to work they were surprised to find that the well was not only full of water but was furnishing a small river which was pouring down over the hill.

The odor reminded people of a match factory and one bystander suggested that probably by some means the diggers had tapped the claim of his Satanic majesty.

Mr. Imboden did some thinking right then and there. As a result he built a reservoir at the lower end of the place, walled it with rock and then laid a pipe line from the well to the place, and the work of "healing the sick and the afflicted" began. There was mineral in the water, and many people thought they were benefited by it. Mr. Imboden did not commercialize the place, however. It was open to everyone and free.

Another idea was presented to Mr. Imboden's mind, that of having a skating rink in the winter. He built a dam across a ravine in the hollow and soon had a lake. It became very popular as a skating rink among the young folks of the city. A bath house also was erected and mineral baths were advertised, but, boo-oo—the water was too cold to make that popular.

The spring remained many years, though its popularity waned. After Mr. Imboden's death the land was platted and sold, and when streets were graded the spring was covered up. It burst out again when a sewer was being laid, making trouble for the workmen, but concrete work put a final stop to the flow of water.

The spring was in use as late as 1900. It was south of the west end of Spring street, off of Greenwood avenue.

CHAPTER LXIII

DECATUR IN THE '90s

DECATUR was having its fun back in the "Gay Nineties", but it also was having one of the most interesting periods of its development as a city. Replacing of old frame or brick buildings, relics of other days, with modern three to seven story business structures featured that development. They are buildings which are in use today. Decatur had awakened to the fact that it had become a city, and it went about the task of making itself look like one, particularly in its business district.

This period saw the beginning and expansion of many of the big interests here today, including the Mueller and Faries factories. It saw the continuation of public improvements, such as paving, sewers and waterworks. In 1891 the sum of $66,288 was spent on sewers. The following year the system was expanded to the extent of $39,065. Those were great sums in those days.

The first part of the decade was a flourishing one. In the year 1891 the total cost of buildings erected in Decatur was $1,166,088. The next year the amount passed $2,000,000. Then came the hard times of 1893 and 1894 and the effect was felt in the building line. In 1893, only $900,000 was spent on buildings; in 1894, only $600,000.

COURT HOUSE, 1892

But Decatur didn't stand still long. By 1895 the city had recovered its former stride, and was going strong. That year the sum of $1,300,000 was invested in building.

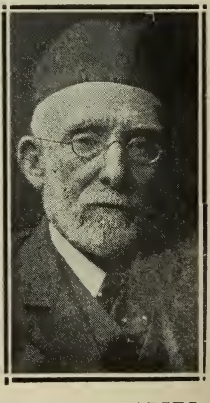
By the end of the decade Decatur had among its new buildings The Review four story brick at North and North Main streets, an addition to the high school, a new transfer house, Syndicate block,[1] the Millikin building, Morehouse & Wells building, Pasfield building, addition to Loeb building on North Water, Young Brothers and Maris building on East Cerro Gordo, Mattes brick company plant, Decatur Cereal company mill, Mueller plant on Cerro Gordo, Shellabarger mill additions, Pugh, H. B. Durfee, Oakland and Warren schools, the beginning of the Wabash and Illinois Central stations, Faries factory, Library block (first and second), Bohon block, Guards Armory, Temple block, Wingate block, Mueller Plumbing and Heating company building, new St. Nicholas hotel, Parke and Sons warehouse and court house. New churches included the Congregational, St. Johannes' Lutheran, Cumberland Presbyterian, Christian tabernacle, East Park Baptist, First Presbyterian and St. John's Episcopal.

ST. JOHANNES' LUTHERAN CHURCH, 1892

In 1895 occurred the fire which destroyed the Powers block on South Water street, and the rebuilding of that block and the Powers Opera house.

STORES AND INDUSTRIES

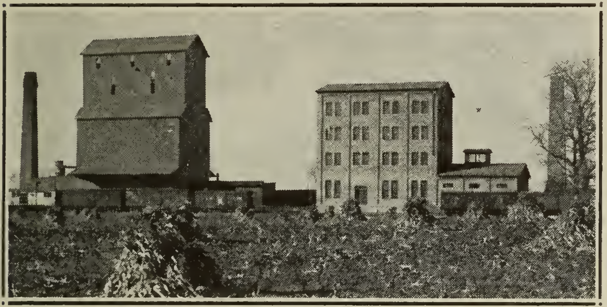
Some of the big stores in Decatur today had their start during this period, among them the Gushard, Stewart and H. S. Gebhart dry goods companies. Other stores started then and still in business are the Bell drug store, the Folrath shoe store and the Decatur drug company store. Wholesale firms beginning business were D. F. Riddell company, Stadler and McClelland company, and Mueller, Platt and Wheeland company.



ROBERT FARIES

The Faries Manufacturing company was organized in 1894. Robert Faries had started years before as a workman, then opened a small shop on Herkimer street, as East Grand avenue was then called. Additions were made from time to time. When the Faries Manufacturing Company was organized, he became the president, W. E. Surface vice-president and superintendent, and E. P. Irving secretary-treasurer. Many of the articles manufactured by this company were inventions of Mr. Faries.

Fixtures of various kinds, lamp holders, boiler tube cleaners, gun cleaning rods, check rower wire, and various other articles were made by the firm.



PRATT CEREAL MILL
(Later site of Staley plant.)

The Decatur Cereal mill, which in later years became the nucleus of the Staley Manufacturing company's plant, was erected in 1895. It had a capacity of grinding ten car loads of corn a day. The mill was built by the Pratts. F. M. Pratt and R. E. Pratt had been in the grain business in Decatur since 1880. In 1891 they organized the Decatur Union Elevator company, the name being changed later to the Decatur Cereal Mill company. The Pratts had branch offices in a number of cities in the middle west.

W. H. Suffern moved his grain business from Pierson to Decatur in 1891, and was joined in 1892 by Robert I. Hunt. The company, incorporated as Suffern, Hunt & Co., erected a mill later at Union street and the Wabash. The same men in 1907 built a cereal mill at Eldorado and Van Dyke. It burned in 1909.

The U. S. Wire Mat company was incorporated in 1892. Frank P. Wells was general manager and treasurer, and C. M. Hurst secretary. It developed a business which has extended all over the world. It now is the U. S. Manufacturing corporation, with J. L. Bennett as president.

The Decatur Trunk factory was started in 1890.

The Home Manufacturing company, garment makers, was organized about 1896 by C. M. Allison and Fred H. Benham. The latter did not remain in the business long. It is now run by Allison's son-in-law, John H. McEvoy.

The Macon County Farmers' institute was started in 1895.

The present transfer house was built in 1895, costing $2,700. It was paid for by subscriptions from merchants and property owners adjacent to the square. The Street Railway company donated $500 and agreed to furnish and maintain the building.

More and more Decatur was taking on the conveniences and dignity of a city. New buildings required elevators. Pianos were replacing reed organs in the homes. Brick sidewalks were being laid. The period was marked by the popularity of scroll work in decorating houses. Many a house with this fancywork pattern of architecture still stands.

Decatur had its first automobile in the '90s and it attracted about as much attention as anything that had struck the city up to that time. It was the Benz motor wagon belonging to Hieronymus Mueller. It came from Germany, arriving April 25, 1895. Everybody in town was out to see the new rubber-tired road wagon that ran without horses. Horses, by the way, ran from it—they were frightened at the new-fangled vehicle, which went down the street in a burst of noise and glory—and also dust.

Life was gay in the '90s. There was no suffering from lack of entertainment.

Outdoor recreation spots were popular. Oakland and Riverside parks were at the heydey of their careers. Fairview was being

—Photo by J. E. Bering.

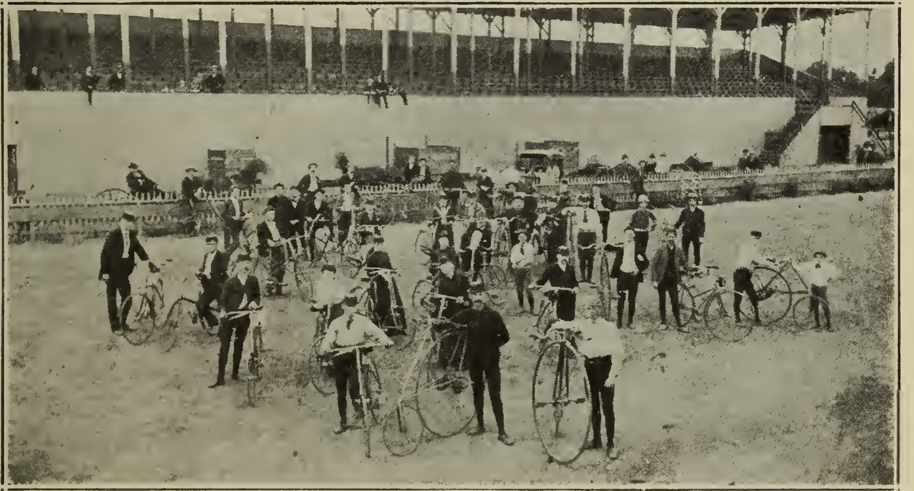
DECATUR GROUP AT MACKINAW, SEPT. 9, 1891

Left to right—Mrs. Worsham, Mrs. B. F. Sibley, Mrs. I. W. Ehrman, John R. Miller, Mrs. J. J. Peddecord, Mrs. J. G. Cloyd, Mrs. J. L. Peake, Mrs. John R. Miller, Mrs. M. A. Cloyd, J. G. Cloyd.

developed as a city park. Excursions to other places attracted many. A favorite spot for many of Decatur's leading citizens was Mackinaw, near Peoria. A delightful camping ground along the P. D. & E. railroad, with plenty of fish in the Mackinaw river waiting for the hook, was too much of a temptation to be missed. A picture shows a Decatur group at Mackinaw on a camping excursion arranged by John R. Miller. In the background can be seen the railroad trestle. Mr. Miller had a cottage there, as did eight or ten others.

At home electric street cars were still so novel that everyone must go trolley riding. Trolley parties were the rage. Gay young folks chartered a car for an evening, and had a big thrill in going over the street car lines.

Bicycles had the same place in the hearts of the travel-loving public as the automobiles of a generation later. The first bicycles, with a high front wheel and small wheel behind, were called "ordinaries". The "Star", with big wheel in back, was another popular make. The Star cyclists formed a club, which was the predecessor of the Decatur Wheelmen's club, which came into being after the "safety" wheel, with its pneumatic tires, had come into general use. It is the form of the bicycle today.



IN THE DAYS OF BICYCLES

Photo taken in 1890 at race track, where race meet was held by Star Cycling club. Percy Ewing, owner of photo, at extreme right. Others in the picture, so far as can be identified, are L. W. Hatch, Bell Telephone company manager; W. Ermentrout, Silas Long and Mrs. Long, Robert Spaulding, Leo Heilbrun, Miss McDermott, —— Freeman, Edwin Ewing and Mrs. Ewing, Harry Shlaudeman, Troy Alexander, G. R. Bohon, Arthur Alexander, Frank Dodd, Fred Meech of Assumption, Charles Saxton, Mr. Mathews, Ben Shockley, Charles Young and Mrs. Young, Fred ("Bits") Mueller, Dr. O. F. Corman.

Bicycle fans promoted bicycle races and century rides, a century ride being 100 miles made in twenty-four hours. A few made a "double" century, 200 miles in twenty-four hours. This was usually a trip from or to Chicago. For a number of years the Wheelmen's club flourished, and had a big influence in promoting clean streets in Decatur.

There were in town two "bicycles built for two", which were in demand by the young swains who wanted to take their best girls for a ride.

The bicycle, by the way, cut into the livery stable business in those days. Instead of renting a horse and buggy the young man rented bicycles. Paul Hiekisch, Orville Ewing and others had bicycles for rent.

Women bicyclers, wearing bloomer outfits, at first shocked the dignity of their elders, as their daughters in a later day caused consternation by their scantiness of dress.

The Fourth of July was always an occasion to be duly celebrated. There was no lack of patriotism, if one may judge by the hilarity and gorgeousness of the celebrations. Parades, speeches, shows, fireworks, all had their place in the program. Members of various organizations donned their very gladdest of raiment and appeared in all their glory in the processions.

In the cool of the summer evenings, Mr. Business Man and his family were out in their rubber-tired surrey enjoying a drive about town, and perhaps stopping for a chat with friends along the way. Social life was marked by hospitality and informality. Walking was a favorite pastime with many, and a hike to Fairview or Riverside park was a delight. Boating on the Sangamon, usually starting from the

WOODMEN PARADE, JULY 4, 1892

landing at Riverside park, was a sport not yet forgotten. From about 1895 to 1905, the annual corn festivals were the big events of the year. Corn was king in reality, even to the extent of constructing a king out of grains of corn. Arthur McBride so combined the red, white and yellow grains as to make a figure royal enough for any people. This figure, with frame and throne of corn stalks, held the place of honor at the festival.

Side shows set up in Central park and the streets around it, lacked nothing in attractions. The ferris wheel, the merry-go-round, the animals, the trapeze performances, the snake show, all and sundry, amused the crowds while the pink lemonade, popcorn and sandwich vendors refreshed them. Even the moving picture, then in its infancy, was to be seen, and as the picture moved its flickering way across the screen, people marveled at the sight.

An interesting social event, which brought to mind the early days of the county, was the golden wedding anniversary of Mr. and Mrs. J. Y. Braden, which took place Jan. 23, 1890, at their home north of Decatur.[2] Mr. Braden and Miss Laura A. Hunting were married Jan. 23, 1840, in the old Central house on the west side of the 200 block North Main street, Justice Isaac C. Pugh officiating. One of the wedding guests was Richard J. Oglesby. Naturally Mr. Oglesby received an invitation to the golden wedding anniversary in 1890. Being unable to attend, he sent a letter of congratulation, in which he said that it was the first time he had ever received an invitation to the fiftieth wedding anniversary of a couple whose marriage he had attended fifty years before.

Much more could be said of the good old days of the '90s, but a big share of Decatur's population can remember them for themselves. There were periods of depression, also, such as the railroad strike of 1894.

A LYNCHING

One of the exciting events of the period was the lynching of a negro, known as Samuel J. Bush, in 1893.

On May 29 a woman living south of Decatur, had been assaulted by a negro, and on the following day another woman, living between Decatur and Mt. Zion, had suffered the same experience. Posses were soon hunting for the negro. Bush, who answered the description, was captured in Moultrie county June 2, and brought to the Macon county jail.

At 2:45 o'clock Saturday morning an armed mob appeared at the jail. Chief of Police Mason was thrown out of the way, the office door and jail door were demolished with sledge hammers and iron bars, the guards were overpowered. Bush, stark naked, was dragged out, protesting his innocence. Halters from their horses were fashioned into a noose by the mob leaders, and it was fastened to an electric light pole at the northeast corner of Water and Wood streets. A cab driver was forced to drive his cab close to the pole so the doomed man could climb up, and when the cab was driven out from under him, his body was left dangling in the air. The mob gave three cheers for Mt. Zion and Decatur and hurriedly dispersed.

Governor Altgeld offered a reward of $200 for each of the lynchers, but authorities were unsuccessful in learning the identity of any of them.

FIRST "KELLY" WAGON

Decatur had its first patrol wagon in the '90s, and from that time on many a Decatur boy and girl was scared into submissive obedience by threats of sending for the "kelly wagon". First drivers of the wagon were Henry Kossieck and Clayton Clements, the former being on day duty, and the later on night duty. The two horses that pulled the wagon were dubbed "Clayt" and "Henry" in honor of their drivers. The accompanying picture of the first patrol wagon, with Mr. Kossieck in the driver's seat, was taken about 1896. It was called "Kelly" wagon because a man named Kelly was the first hauled in it.

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[1] Syndicate block was built in 1890 by a syndicate composed of Drs. W. J. and Cassidy Chenoweth, Roberts and Greene, F. H. Converse, W. O. McNabb, Julius Randall, John Mattes, and Elmer Troutman.

[2] An interesting feature of the celebration was the reading of an invitation to a party held on Christmas in the year 1839 at the Decatur house, at which Mr. Braden was one of the hosts. This invitation had been issued to Jane Williams, later Mrs. Watt Culver, and she had preserved it all those years. Other hosts, or "managers" as they were called, at that party were H. M. Gorin, Joseph King, J. H. Elliott, William Bosworth, N. Kibbee, Joseph Williams, John Ricketts, J. P. Hickcok, E. O. Smith, W. W. Oglesby, S. Prather and J. S. Adamson.

Illinois Central trains were stopped near the Braden home to accommodate the 210 guests who attended the golden wedding celebration.

CHAPTER LXIV

WAR WITH SPAIN—NATIONAL GUARD

WHEN the fury of an entire nation was aroused over the sinking of the United States battleship Maine in the harbor of Havana, Cuba, Feb. 15, 1898, and the cry for vengeance was heard, Illinois was the first state in the union to assure the head of the nation its support in whatever action was taken to maintain the honor of the country.

It did not take long to mete out punishment for the indignity. For quick action and early successful conclusion, the war with Spain is unparalleled in history. Uncle Sam gave a spanking which hurt.

The call from the secretary of war for the National Guard or State Militia brought Company H, I. N. G., of Decatur into the fray. The call for troops came to Governor John R. Tanner April 25. By April 27 seven regiments of infantry and one of cavalry were mobilized at Springfield.

Decatur men who were on the staff of the Fifth Regiment, of which Company H was a part, were as follows:

Lieutenant Colonel—Frank P. Wells.
Major—Walter F. Colladay.
Assistant Surgeon—James L. Bevans.
Battalion Adjutant—Arthur J. Gallagher.
Musicians—Henry L. Roberts, Joseph W. Franke.
Hospital Stewards—Bruce Chenoweth, William Housum.
Band—Louis B. Cassell, Alfred D. Shawl, Hubert C. Wilkin.

IN CAMP

GENERAL FRANK P. WELLS

The regiment was mustered in at Camp Tanner, Springfield, May 7, 1898. From there it went by rail to Chickamauga, Ga., arriving May 16. It remained there until July 27, when it marched to Rossville, six miles, returning the same day to camp. Camp was broken on Aug. 3, and the regiment marched to Ringgold, where it boarded cars for Newport News, Va. There it went into camp and remained until Aug. 10 when it boarded the transport Obdam for Porto Rico.

On Aug. 11, however, it was ordered to disembark and go into camp again at Newport News. It remained at Newport News until Aug. 18, when it left for Lexington, Ky., where it went into camp and remained until Sept. 5 when it left for Springfield where it went into camp at Camp Lincoln. The regiment was mustered out at Springfield Oct. 16, 1898.

Company H was composed of (names taken from Adjutant General's Report):

COMPANY H

Captain—John F. Cassell.
First Lieutenant—Louis G. Chandler.
Second Lieutenant—James E. Reavis.
First Sergeant—William H. Heiner.
Sergeants—Arthur B. Davis, William Layton, Leo J. Heiner, George T. Barney.
Corporals—Charles Davis, Samuel May, George L. Young, Harry Aldridge.
Musician—Louis B. Cassell.
Wagoner—Mark A. McDonald.
Privates—
John W. Allen.
Charles Appley.
William Bachstein.
James E. Beardsley.
William M. Bair.
Charles E. Bliss.
Samuel Earl Buehler.
Harry Chiles.
Bruce Chenoweth.
Sanford S. Clapper.
George E. Cope.
Charles B. Colerick.
Colonel E. Davis.
Ralph A. Dimmick.
Bert E. DeHart.
Henry Durbon.
George W. Duncan.
Ed H. Eckels.
Robert Eckels.
Percy S. Ewing.
Isaac E. Eiler.
John H. Fleming.
William C. Frew.
David A. Fribourg.
Lewis B. Fullmer.
Frank G. Gardner.
Grayson Garrison.
Louis A. Gring.
Howard P. Hanthorn.
William A. Hamilton.
Rollin W. Hatfield.
Harl E. Hedrick.
William H. Housum.
Charles C. Hopping.
Granville M. Huffman.
Oscar Johnson.
George Mackordes.
Charles A. Martin.
Alphonso Murphy.
Abraham L. Mickerson.
Berte Myrick.
James L. McQueen.
Francis M. Newell.
Jerry W. Nicholson.
Samuel M. Pegram.
H. L. Rundell.
Josiah E. Reeme.
Charles M. Richardson.
Charles R. Rowdybush.
Leverett H. Rude.
George Steichen.
John Smith.
Richard R. Scruggs.
John F. Shutter.
Joseph H. Shaffer.
Earl F. Seiberling.
Clarence E. Siewers.
Elmer J. Smick.
Albert M. Stogsdill.
Edward Travis.
Ralph Towne.
John A. Wagy.
Israel J. Weakley.
Eugene K. Webster.
W. Scott Wilson.
Arthur D. Wilson.
Frank A. Wise.
Gilbert J. Woodruff.
William J. Zeiss.
Transferred from Co. K—
Frank Boone.
Transferred from Co. D—
Louis Baker.
Solomon Hawkins.
Recruits—
Arthur T. Bell.
Charlie S. Betz.
Jesse Birchfield.
James F. Brown.
William O. Clinger.
Pete Cunniff.
Clarence Drake.
Arthur L. Fullmer.
Stanley T. Grimes.
Curtis H. Hoffhein.
Oscar B. Harrauff.
M. C. Lanahan.
Charles H. Monroe.
John E. Magee.
Emery F. Marshall.
Benson A. Myers.
William Myer.
John Reguer.
Fred Stickle.
Thomas Seip.
Alonzo Sheneman.
Alfred D. Shawl.
Charles Virgils.
Charles E. Vance.
John Wekaman.

Men from Macon county who were members of other companies were:

George C. Carvard, Company B, transferred from Company K.
Louis Lester, Company C, transferred from Company D.
John M. Bayly, Company D, transferred to Company B.
Clinton D. Maddox, Company D, transferred to Company B.
Abner Orr, Company D, transferred to Company B.
William W. Soule, Company D, transferred to Company C.
Fred J. McDonald, Company F, transferred from Company K.
Amos H. Burton, Company F.

Hubert C. Wilkin, Company F, appointed musician, transferred to band.
Joseph Franke, Company G, transferred to band, R. O. No. 53.
John B. Reynolds, Company I, transferred to Company K.
Charles F. Bair, Company K, transferred to Company B.
Frank Boone, Company K, transferred to Company H.
Charles Cole, Company K, transferred to Company B.
George Francis, Company K.
John C. Stoy, Company K, transferred to Company B.

Men from this county who were in other regiments were:

Second Regiment, Company B—William Bogle, Maroa.
Third Regiment, Company I—James E. Goodwin, Macon.
Fourth Regiment, Company K—William I. Robinson, Decatur.
Sixth Regiment, Company I—David A. Donovan, Alonzo L. Kirk, Chester N. May, Decatur.
Eighth Regiment, Company A—William Landis (enlisted at York, Pa.).
Eighth Regiment, Company G—Noble D. Lamb, Albert Butler, John H. H. Hawkin, Cassidy Jacobs, Joe Stipes.
Eighth Regiment, Company K—William Wyatt, Decatur; George McWilliams, Macon.
Ninth Regiment, Company E—Alonzo Gibson, Frank E. Lefever; Company F—Richard S. Brown, Warrensburg.
First Cavalry—Dr. Alfred E. Mowry, Forsyth, hospital steward, promoted to assistant surgeon.
First Cavalry, Troop D—W. J. Armstrong.

Men of the Fifth Regiment were greatly disappointed over the change in order which kept them in the states. The reason offered by the adjutant-general was to give justice to the state of Indiana. Three Illinois regiments had already been ordered into active service, when it was noted that Indiana had none, hence orders were given to substitute an Indiana regiment for the Fifth Illinois, which had previously been ordered to Porto Rico.

TO PHILIPPINES

Following the war there was need for more troops, when insurrection arose in the Philippines, which had been ceded to the United States through the treaty with Spain.

Company H did not have the opportunity to go to the Philippines as a body, so many of the boys, having had a taste of army life and wanting more, enlisted singly or in pairs in various regiments, as they had the opportunity.

Among the Decatur and Macon county men in the volunteer or regular army who were in service either in the islands or stationed in Cuba or at points in this country were Dr. James L. Bevans, surgeon; Robert Eckles, Ed Eckles, Arthur Fullmer, Lewis Fullmer, Frank Wise, William Bair, Charles Hopping, Sam Pegram, John Reguer, George Mackordes, Oscar Johnson, Charles Virgils, all former members of Company H.

Others recruited were Henry McCauley, Charles C. Cole, Claude Day, Charles B. McClure, Charles W. Nichols, Bert W. Smith, Stephen H. Cory, S. Busby, Press Waggoner, Calvin S. Clark, Charles B. Houston, William S. Swegle, James Davis, Andrew F. Worley, Curtis H. Hoffhein, Arthur M. Duggan, Oscar L. Bunker, Robert L. Ferris, James C. Barnes, Claude G. Young, Henry E. Kitch, William I. Fagan, Bert Damon, all of Decatur; Charles A. Thrift of Emery, Berry E. Turner, Orlando Pierce and William O. Clinger of Warrensburg, William O. McWilliams, Carl M. Shatzer, William Ryan and L. A. Crawford of Harristown.

VETERANS ORGANIZE

The veterans of the Spanish-American war living in Decatur organized a local body of the United Spanish War Veterans in 1911, naming the camp after Scott Wilson, a member of Company H, who died June 17, 1905. It was successful in securing one of the bronze tablets made out of metal from the battleship Maine. The tablet is 13 by 18 inches in size, and contains a figure of Liberty extending a wreath over a harbor.

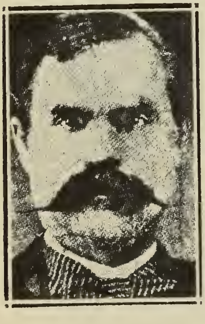
The camp has been active in the work of the state organization, and in 1925 entertained the state encampment. In 1912 an auxiliary was formed by the wives of veterans.

NATIONAL GUARD

Company H, Illinois National Guard, was organized in July, 1877, at the time of a big railroad strike, I. D. Walker leading in the move to organize. Previous to that time Decatur had a Company G and a Company K, of the Fifth Regiment.[1] Andrew Goodman was first captain of Company H. Other officers at the time of the organization were: Frank H. Hall, first lieutenant; Henry W. Elwood, second lieutenant; and Ben F. Dillehunt, orderly sergeant. The company was reorganized in 1880 with W. W. Foster as captain, W. H. Elwood as first lieutenant, and Fred W. Wismer as second lieutenant.

Up to the time of the Spanish-American war the company was called out a number of times on strike duty, in 1878 at East St. Louis, in 1886 at East St. Louis, in 1894 at Pana and Danville and in 1898 at Pana. In 1889 Company H won highest honors in the Fifth Regiment, and the Regiment won state honors. In 1899 the company furnished the guard of honor at the funeral of Former Governor Richard J. Oglesby.

This company came into prominence in 1903 when Frank P. Wells was elected colonel of the regiment, and J. Frank Cassell was promoted to major. Decatur then became the regimental and battalion headquarters. In 1907 Colonel Wells was made brigadier-general of the Second Brigade. In 1918 he became brigadier-general of the Illinois Reserve Militia. That same year Charles P. Summers, also of Decatur, was made colonel of the Fifth Regiment, Illinois Reserve Militia.



CAPT. ANDREW GOODMAN

Company H was mustered out in 1913, and a new company, known as Company L, was organized. This company became the nucleus for Company A, 124th Machine Gun battalion, when the United States entered the World war in 1917.

After this country became involved in the World war, and it appeared as if all the military forces would be called, leaving no protection at home, three new regiments were organized in Illinois for service in the state.[2] Decatur organized a company which became Company H of the Tenth Regiment.[3] The Tenth Regiment was mustered into service July 21, 1917. Company H served several times on riot duty, at Springfield in 1917, in Chicago and Peoria in 1919, and at West Frankfort in 1920.

After the war was over, the military forces of the country were re-created under the new Army Reorganization act, and have since been under federal control. Military organizations now in Decatur include Headquarters company, band and Service company, One Hundred Thirtieth infantry, and Non-Divisional units of Organized Reserves. A chapter of Reserve Officers was organized in 1924. Both U. S. army and navy recruiting stations are maintained in Decatur.

Plans have been drawn for a new armory to be erected in Decatur, at the corner of Jackson and Eldorado streets. Appropriations of $212,000 have been made for this building.

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[1] Company K (Decatur Grenadiers) started out with the idea of having good sized men only as members. Five feet, ten inches, was set as the minimum height. First officers of the company were George Zeiss, captain; Charles Durfee, first lieutenant; Ben McReynolds, second lieutenant. Durfee later became captain, and when he was promoted to major, O. B. Gorin became captain. This company was mustered out Jan. 1, 1884.

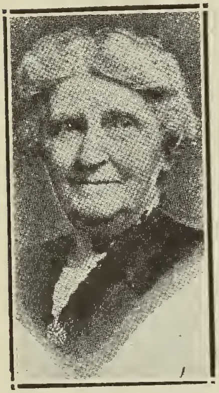
[2] The three new regiments were the 9th, 10th and 11th. The man named to assume command of the 11th regiment was a former Decatur man, Brigadier-General Frank S. Dickson. Dickson, who is a graduate of the Decatur high school, was named adjutant-general in 1910, and held that office until 1922.

[3] Decatur also had a company in the Illinois Reserve Militia. Company G, 5th Regiment, was sworn into service in November, 1917, and was mustered out in October, 1920. Howard Krigbaum was captain. The Reserve Militia was composed mostly of men who could not go to war, but were available for service within the state. Company G was never called upon for duty, but it met regularly for drill.

CHAPTER LXV

MRS. JANE MARTIN JOHNS

MRS. JANE MARTIN JOHNS saw Decatur grow for seventy years, and in whatever work came to the hands of the women in that period she was one of the leaders. She first came to Decatur in 1849, and in 1854 returned to make it her home. Here she lived until her death in 1919.



MRS. JANE M. JOHNS

Mrs. Johns was a woman of unusual intelligence, and her volume of "Personal Recollections" of Civil war times in Decatur is one of the most valued of local historical books. Little escaped her keen observation, and her own activity in women's work during the war together with her knowledge of the horrors of war gained through the service of her husband as a surgeon in the army, gave her an insight of the war such as few women had.

In her later years her wonderful memory served her well in recounting those days. It was considered a remarkable feat that at the age of eighty-five she was able to tell so realistically of events of the stirring days of the war fifty-five years before.

Miss Jane Martin and Dr. H. C. Johns were married in Circleville, O., Oct. 29, 1845, and came to Illinois in 1849, settling first in Piatt county.[1] In 1854 they moved to Decatur.

Dr. Johns had practiced medicine in Ohio, but gave up that profession on coming to Macon county, in order to devote his time to farming and stock raising. He was extremely successful, and became recognized as an authority on stock. In 1852 he helped organize the Illinois State Board of Agriculture, and served as vice president and as president of that body. In 1856 he made a trip to England to represent the Illinois State Breeders association, returning with the first shorthorn cattle, Irish terriers and Berkshire pigs ever brought here.

The Johns home on Johns hill, now the site of the Washington grade school and the Johns hill Junior high school, was for many years one of Decatur's interesting homes.

When that house was built, in the '50s, it was a country home. Decatur did not then extend that far. Located on the top of the hill, which is one of the highest elevations in Decatur, the house commanded a view which could not be had elsewhere.

The house stood in the northwest forty of a tract of 160 acres. The land was bought by William Martin, father of Mrs. Johns, in 1852. Soon afterward he began the erection of the house, completing it in 1857.[2] This property was to be Mrs. Johns' chief inheritance from her father.

When Mrs. Johns had her first sight of that hill, she said she would be content to live at Decatur only if she could live on that hill. She had her wish, and all the years of her life afterwards it was her home.

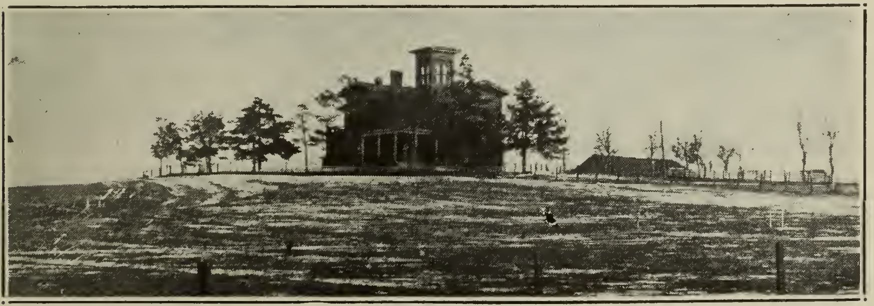
Her gift to Decatur of about eighteen acres of the home farm is described in the chapter on parks. She often said:

"This land has been the playground for Decatur children for sixty years. I want it saved for them."

She also hoped that the summit of the hill, the site of the home, could be used as the site for some sort of monumental structure. She did not think of two great school buildings like the Washington grade school and the Johns hill Junior high, but they admirably carry out the plan she had vaguely in her mind.

The school ground and park together include about thirty-one acres. It is a combination that educators say is hardly equalled in the country.

Mrs. Johns was one of the founders of the Ladies' Library association, the forerunner of the Decatur public library, and raised money for books and otherwise helped to keep that society going during its first early years of struggle. She also was one of the charter members of the Decatur Woman's club.



THE JOHNS HOME

Mrs. Johns' life was filled with interesting experiences. She was a personal friend of Abraham Lincoln, Judge David Davis and other notable men of her time. Once in 1843, when only sixteen, while on a boat trip to New Orleans she had the pleasure of meeting Henry Clay.

She also happened to be in New Orleans on Jan. 21, 1861, the day Louisiana seceded from the union, and in telling of that time said it was almost impossible to describe the tense feeling and excitement that prevailed in the south then.

Mrs. Johns first met Abraham Lincoln in 1849, on the day he helped to unload her piano at the Macon house in Decatur, where she was living temporarily. That evening she gave a piano program for Lincoln and the other lawyers who were here, it being court week in Decatur. More than once in after years Mrs. Johns entertained Lincoln in her home, both while she lived in Piatt county and when a resident of Decatur.

That piano, as has often been told, was the first in Decatur, and it attracted no little attention. It was quite a curiosity, and people from a distance when in Decatur always went to take a look at the instrument. Often Mrs. Johns played and sang for Mr. Lincoln.

In her book Mrs. Johns tells the story of overhearing a plot to defeat Lincoln when he was a candidate for the United States senate in 1855, and of how Lincoln, on hearing of the plot, sacrificed his own interests and brought about the election of Lyman Trumbull. Mrs. Johns was in Springfield at the time, her husband being a member of the general assembly. She was in her hotel room when she heard the plot being discussed by men in the room next to her.

Mrs. Johns saw her country engaged in four wars, the Mexican, Civil, Spanish-American and World wars. She was one of the most active workers in the Hospital Aid society of Decatur during the Civil war. She was then a young woman. When the World war came on she was again ready, though then ninety-one years of age, to do her bit. Day after day she met with the other women at the Red Cross headquarters, as busy almost as she had been during the troublous days of the '60s. Making trench candles was her part of the activities this time.

Mrs. Johns once made a visit to the American Samoa Islands, when her son-in-law, Rear Admiral C. B. T. Moore, was governor of the islands. She was then seventy-eight years old, but she enjoyed that trip as much as a woman of younger years. It was a characteristic of her—to remain young in spite of her advancing years. It might be said that she never grew old, though at the time she passed away, June 26, 1919, she was nearly ninety-two years of age. She had been a widow since 1900, her husband having passed away in that year.

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[1] Mrs. Johns tells in her book how Dr. Johns happened to locate in Illinois.

He had first chosen Lafayette, Ind., as his home, but he changed his mind after a visit in Illinois. With a friend he had come to Piatt county to hunt deer. When near Decatur their fine blooded horses frightened at a peddler's wagon and ran away. Dr. Johns was thrown out of the buggy and his collarbone was broken. Dr. Joseph King was summoned, and took the injured man to the Macon house where he was cared for by Mrs. Krone for three weeks. Then he went on to the home of his friend, Dr. Peter Hull, near Monticello.

While at Monticello he was so pleased with the land thereabouts that he purchased 1600 acres near that city. It later became the Robert Allerton farm. Dr. Johns then went back to Ohio to persuade his wife to come to Illinois. They made the trip by water to Lafayette and then by wagon here.

[2] The first spiral stairway in Macon county was put in the Johns home. It was built by Andrew Martin and was hewed out of wood by hand.

CHAPTER LXVI

WHERE DECATUR LEADS

NECESSITY is the mother of invention," and the necessity of finding a solution for a problem has in more than one case put Decatur's name before the world. Many inventions have been worked out by Macon county citizens. Each of them would make a romantic story in itself, for the tale of how they came about is full of absorbing interest.

Robert Faries was obliged to work in a dark corner many years ago. It was too dark to do justice to his work, and something had to be done about it. So he rigged up a fixture by which a light could be placed over his work bench. Light fixtures of various kinds became in later years one of the chief outputs of the Faries Manufacturing company.

H. W. Hill was so disgusted with the rooting done by one of his hogs one day that he picked up a piece of wire and jabbed it through the nose of the big porker. It worked. With that wire in his nose the hog had to retire from the rooting business. Mr. Hill put the idea to work. He made the hog ringer and rings which bore his name, and the manufacture of which was a leading industry in Decatur for years and built him a fortune.

When John Beall, millwright, back in the '60s was installing corn shellers—shellers which wouldn't work properly when they were installed—he was sort of disgusted too. He had his own ideas as to how those corn shellers should be made. He made one according to his idea. It worked and has been working ever since. It is the corn sheller which has brought business from all over the world to the Union Iron works.

A pesky fly was continually bothering R. R. Montgomery one day when he was trying to take a nap. The rascally "critter" laughed in glee, no doubt, when Mr. Montgomery tried to lay it low with a folded newspaper. A fan, a magazine, were tried, but the fly always made his getaway. Next Mr. Montgomery tried a piece of wire screen. Then it was his turn to laugh at his tormentor. The screen caught the fly, and Mr. Montgomery realized why—it had not made the gust of air which warned the fly of its approach.

Mr. Montgomery patented the fly swatter in 1900, and manufactured it for a number of years. He called it the King fly swatter, naming it after his father-in-law, Dr. Joseph King, one of Macon county's first physicians. Eventually Mr. Montgomery sold the business to the U. S. Manufacturing company, which today ships fly swatters all over the world.

Many other interesting stories might be told, if space permitted. Inventions of Decatur men may be found everywhere. Soda fountains, invented by Caleb Smith, went all over the country. W. H. Bramble, C. C. Burroughs, H. Mueller, G. D. Haworth, and other Decatur inventors, as told elsewhere in this volume, have brought out widely known products. A. W. Cash valves are found everywhere.

Decatur has a record of being first in many manufacturing lines. The Decatur Coffin company, which was the first industry of that kind west of Indiana, was the first to make burial clothes which set a standard for the world. Others, taking up the new fashion, said, "As good as Decatur's".

Bixby, Pitner and Company began the manufacture of burial shoes here.

Decatur occupies a place as a leader in the making of women's garments. First in the field was the Home Manufacturing company. Then came the Osgood & Heiner company, now Osgood & Sons; the Decatur Garment company, and more recently, the Gragg Garment company.

Wire mats, made in Decatur, have traveled to all corners of the globe, being used on the vessels of the United States navy. They are made by the U. S. Manufacturing company.

At home and abroad can be found products of the Staley, Mueller, Walrus and Williams Sealing company factories. Many other things manufactured in Decatur are widely circulated over the country, and one can scarcely travel anywhere without coming upon some reminder of the home town.

CHAPTER LXVII

MAKE WAY FOR THE AUTO

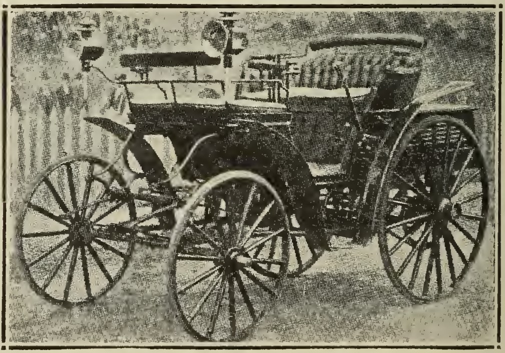
DECATUR narrowly missed being a center for the automobile industry. Hieronymus Mueller, who brought the first car to Decatur in 1895, had in his mind the idea of starting the manufacture of automobiles, an idea which no doubt he would have carried out if he had lived. He did much successful experimenting along that line before his death, which occurred in 1900, five years after he had brought that first car to the city.

It was a great wonder—that first automobile in Decatur. It happened also to be the first one in this section of the country outside of Chicago. At that time there were scarcely a dozen in the entire country.

Mr. Mueller's car, a Benz motor wagon, was imported from Mannheim, Germany. It arrived in Decatur Friday, April 25, 1895. It was announced in the newspapers that day that "Mr. Mueller will take a ride in the motor wagon on Sunday". When the car appeared Sunday, streets were lined with spectators to see the sight of a horseless carriage.

Mr. Mueller exhibited the car at the state fair in Springfield that fall, and made the trip to that city in "only five hours". The speed was considered amazing. It was stated that if necessary the motor wagon could make the astonishing record of fifteen miles an hour! On that trip to Springfield men went ahead to warn drivers of horses as to what was coming, and to help hold the frightened animals.

In November Mr. Mueller entered his motor wagon in the automobile contest held in Chicago by the Times-Herald. In that contest the line-up of entries was as follows:


MUELLER'S BENZ MOTOR WAGON

Duryea Motor Wagon company, Springfield, Mass., gasoline machine, representing "American type."

De La Vergne Refrigerating Machine Company, New York, gasoline machine with German motor.

Morris and Salmon, Philadelphia, electric machine.

H. Mueller & Company, Decatur, Ill., gasoline machine imported from Mannheim, Germany.

R. H. Macy Company, New York, gasoline machine of German make, with American improvements.

Sturgis Electric Motorcycle Company, Chicago, electric machine.

The run was from Chicago to Evanston and back. First to finish was the Duryea car. Its average speed for the trip was 7½ miles an hour. The first prize was $2,000 and a gold medal.

The Mueller car, Oscar Mueller driving, was second, and the Macy car third.

Mr. Mueller finished only 1 hour and thirty-five minutes behind the winner. These three cars were the only ones which finished the course.

The next car to come to Decatur was a Locomobile steamer belonging to Frank Shlaudeman. Other early owners of cars were Frank Faries, Robert Faries and W. O. McNabb. All had Olds runabouts. E. P. Irving had a White steamer. John Van Gundy and D. B. Folrath were the first purchasers of Rambler cars.

Johnson & Landis took the agency in the year 1903 for the Rambler car. That was the first regularly established automobile agency here, though a number of cars had been sold in Decatur before that time. The first car load shipment from Kenosha, Wis., for Johnson and Landis, containing three cars, was made in May, 1904.

Though H. Mueller did not live to carry out his plan to manufacture cars, Decatur did not lack in individuals who made their own cars. Paul Hiekisch, who made the first bicycle that was made in Decatur, also made the first steam automobile, according to report. George A. Henderson and others also made their own cars. In the Wayne carriage factory, W. J. Wayne worked for months on a design for a body for an automobile.

D. B. FOLRATH'S RAMBLER
Will Landis and D. B. Folrath in front; George E. Johnson and a friend in back.

"Do you boys expect that there will ever be enough automobiles in

Decatur to fill that place?" said a prominent business man one day to George E. Johnson of the Johnson and Landis firm, as they watched the construction work on the first garage erected in Decatur. It was at the northeast corner of State and Wood streets.

After the business man had received an affirmative reply, he went on to say:

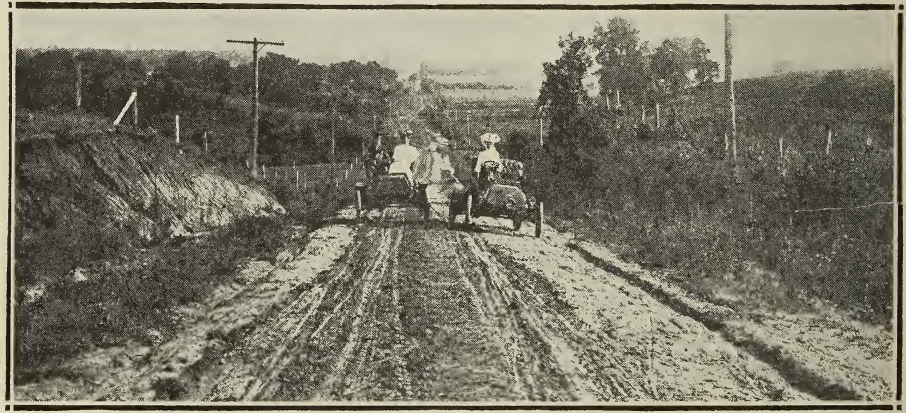
"You're crazy. You've got wheels in your head. You boys have made a little money, and now you are fixing to waste it. Don't do it."

That was in 1904. That first garage isn't lonesome now. It has plenty of company. And they all seem to be having their share of business.

In the early days of the automobile a trip to Springfield was a big undertaking. Preparations for the momentous event were made days in advance. Bright and early on the day of departure, the would-be travelers arose, and the start was made "with our hearts in our boots", as one man described it. "If the trip was a success, we were proudly conscious of it, and came back with our faces wreathed in smiles. If it wasn't a success, we made excuses."

No one then would venture such a trip alone. He must have plenty of help along. It took all of one man's attention to run the car. Another was needed every time a horse and driver were met on the way. At such times the auto was stopped, while the man led the frightened animal (and driver, too) past the danger.

It did not take long for that day to pass, however. Now the 1930 model car gets not even a look from the 1930 model horse.



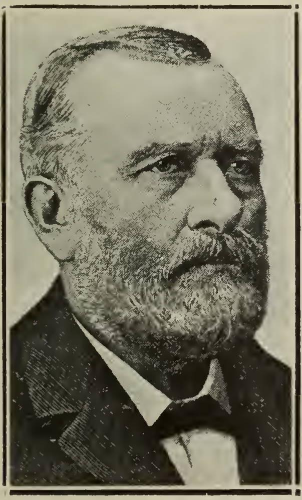
WHEN AUTOS WERE YOUNG AND ROADS UNPAVED

CHAPTER LXVIII

JAMES MILLIKIN

A name that for fifty years has been among the most prominent in Decatur has been that of Millikin. In the financial records of our college, churches, hospitals, Y. M. C. A. and Y. W. C. A., institutional homes, Art institute, as well as leading commercial and industrial enterprises, it is most conspicuous.

James Millikin, who brought that name to Decatur three-quarters of a century ago, at once became a leader in business and industry, and was that all his life. Few men have such even and steady growth in success and prosperity as he had. His intimates were always impressed by his sound common sense and remarkable judgment of men. His foresight and ideas as to values seemed infallible. Reviewing his life one sees these traits in all that he did. Some men have ups and downs. His progress was invariably up, not with spurts or jumps, but with singular evenness and steadiness.



JAMES MILLIKIN

His is no story of struggle with poverty. There is no record of privation and sacrifice. On the other hand, it is one of strength, confidence, enterprise. While still a student he drove sheep west and "sold them to good advantage." So it is all along the sixty years of active business. He was never a driver. He had time for vacation trips and rest. He liked to visit and did visit with friends. His tastes were simple. He made little display. These are only a few characteristics of the man who left his mark in so many places in our history.

James Millikin was born Aug. 2, 1827, at Ten-Mile, Washington county, Pa.[1] In his boyhood days he helped with the farm work in summer and attended district school in winter, later attending Washington college. He became a member of the Pleasant Hill Cumberland Presbyterian church near his home May 27, 1843.

Millikin was a strong, active youth, and showed early that he was capable of taking care of himself. It was while he was in Washington college that he heard stories of the opportunities of the middle west, and in the summer of 1849 he and his father drove a flock of sheep to Indiana where they sold them to good advantage. The next year Mr. Millikin drove a flock to Danville. That winter he attended Wabash college. He made a number of trips back to Pennsylvania in the next few years to bring sheep back to this state, always making money out of the venture. He also bought and traded cattle, renting land on which to graze them.

He soon became known as a breeder of fine stock, and has been called the "first cattle king of the prairie state." He won six silver medal spoons, with the stamp "Illinois State Fair 1857."

Mr. Millikin made his first visit to Decatur in 1856. He saw a future in the place and invested in land. One of his first purchases was the tract of land west of Pine street, north of Main and extending west as far as Oakland, the tract on which he built his home later.

On coming to Decatur to make his home he disposed of his stock, and some land he had acquired, including land at Bement which the Wabash railroad wanted. By these sales he netted something in the neighborhood of $75,000.

After the failure of the Railroad bank in 1860, Mr. Millikin took possession of the room the bank had occupied on Merchant street, put up a sign "James Millikin, Banker", and started in the banking business. From then on until his death the bank was one of his chief interests.

Once, in his early years of banking, he wanted to sell out to his partner, but the partner insisted on selling to him, so he was obliged not only to keep his own interest, but to take that of his partner.

He had various other interests, though, besides his bank. He invested heavily in real estate, seeing the advance in values which was sure to come. He not only invested in Illinois land, but bought thousands of acres in Iowa. He was a member of the firm which ran the Union Iron works. In later years he was interested in Louisiana canal and rice companies.

His achievements and his benefactions were a key to his character. He had high ideals and he was devoted to them. He was always ready to respond to appeals. He not only founded and helped to maintain the James Millikin University, but he gave generously to the Decatur and Macon county hospital, the Girls' Welfare home, the Anna B.

Millikin home, the Art Institute, the Day Nursery, the Y. W. C. A. and other institutions.

He had also a share in the civic life of the city and county, serving as a city alderman and as a member of the board of supervisors.

Many a man owes his business success to Mr. Millikin, who furnished the money to tide him over at critical times in business. He encouraged people to invest in Decatur property. In building the first steel frame building, seven stories high, he set the pace for construction of splendid business buildings.

MRS. MILLIKIN

Mr. Millikin and Miss Anna B. Aston were married Jan. 1, 1857 by Rev. E. W. Thayer, pastor of the First Presbyterian church. She was the daughter of Rev. Samuel M. Aston, who was formerly pastor of the Mt. Zion Cumberland Presbyterian church. Mr. Aston bought a farm near Mt. Zion and that was the family home. Mr. Aston died Nov. 17, 1856. Anna Aston had been educated in the Washington Female seminary in Pennsylvania, and after coming to Mt. Zion taught school in that neighborhood.

MRS. ANNA B. MILLIKIN

Mr. Millikin and his bride first lived at the Revere house, then set up housekeeping in a house at the corner of William and Edward streets, where they lived until 1876 when they moved into their new residence in Millikin place, the house which is now the Art Institute.

When they moved there it was bare land with only two or three buildings of small value. Every tree and shrub was set out under the direction of Mr. Millikin and among them are some of the rarest and tallest now in the city. One rare tree that he placed immediately in front of the residence is the cucumber tree. Another rare tree here, but common in Indiana and east of there, is the tulip tree.

Mrs. Millikin was one of the promoters of the Macon county Industrial school for girls, which was incorporated Feb. 26, 1890. She also was one of the founders of the Anna B. Millikin home, incorporated in 1892, a home for aged women and dependent children. That year Mr. Millikin bought the old Lake hotel at Sangamon and Lowber streets and gave it for a home for elderly women. It was occupied for nearly ten years as the old ladies home. On Feb. 7, 1893, the directors of the girls' school and the old ladies' home had a joint meeting and decided to combine the two institutions. A charter was secured under the name of the Anna B. Millikin home and Macon County Industrial School for Girls.

In 1900 Mr. Millikin agreed to give $10,000 for the erection of a new building, and three acres of land across from Oakland park, if the citizens of Decatur would raise the same amount of money. They responded to the appeal. Mr. Millikin added $5,000 more, and the Anna B. Millikin home, on Oakland avenue, was erected. Since its opening in 1901 it has given a home to many a homeless aged woman and helpless dependent child.

Mr. Millikin passed away at Orlando, Fla., March 2, 1909. Mrs. Millikin lived until July 29, 1913. Mr. Millikin's estate was left in trust, the income to be used for charitable and educational purposes in Decatur. Much, naturally, has gone to the support of the James Millikin university. Mrs. Millikin specified in her will that the old homestead should be used for the development of art, a subject in which she had always been deeply interested. To carry out her wishes, the Decatur Art Institute was established there. Mrs. Millikin was a leading member of the Decatur Art class, an organization of more than fifty years standing in Decatur.

As public benefactors Mr. and Mrs. James Millikin have had no equals in Decatur. The city owes them a big debt of gratitude.

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[1] Van Dyke street was named in honor of James Millikin's mother, whose maiden name was Van Dyke.

CHAPTER LXIX

JAMES MILLIKIN UNIVERSITY

FOR years it was understood in Decatur that James Millikin had in mind the establishment of a school to be located in Oakland park. He had mentioned to friends the giving of the park for a school. On May 6, 1900, he made an offer definitely to Decatur.

That offer came out of a casual remark repeated to A. G. Webber, a man of action. He acted by calling on a friend who also was a Review reporter, and saying:

"I understand that James Millikin said he would give $200,000 and Oakland park for a school if the people of Decatur would give $100,000. Why don't you ask him if he said it? We want that school."

Mr. Millikin was asked, and his reply in his own words, were:

"I said it. I have thought of it a great deal, but I don't know that it is wise to make a newspaper statement about it. I do not care to say a great deal about it now. But it is a fact that I said it and that I mean it.

"I said I would give $200,000 if the citizens would give $100,000. I will give the $200,000 and give Oakland park as a site. I am ready to give my part within thirty days if necessary. The citizens could raise their part easily. I could pick out twenty-five or thirty men who could raise the money, or who could give notes, and the matter would be ended."

In the conversation Mr. Millikin said it was estimated that $150,000 would erect the buildings and lay out the grounds. That would leave $150,000 to start with. The institution would naturally grow, and more money would come in different ways. The endowment probably would reach $500,000 more.

In outlining his ideas as to the work of the school, Mr. Millikin said he wanted it to teach girls to sew and cook, and to train boys for useful trades and also accounting and other such accomplishments.

The first to respond to Mr. Millikin's offer was D. S. Shellabarger, who told G. N. Wagenseller, reporter on the Decatur Herald, that he would give $5,000, announcement to that effect being made in The Herald, May 7. In making the offer, Mr. Shellabarger said:

"That was a generous offer—a handsome offer. The people of Decatur should take advantage of it. I will be one of twenty men to give $5,000 each."

Meantime Dr. W. J. Darby, general educational secretary of the Cumberland Presbyterian church, suggested that Lincoln university at Lincoln, Ill., under the auspices of that church, might be moved to Decatur and combined with the proposed school. Mr. Millikin said in regard to that suggestion:

"That might be possible, though I do not care to set up a school to teach creeds and dogmas. I do not want any sectarianism but I want the young people to have good educations in character as well as in brains. With the distinct understanding that I do not want to import anything, that is, to teach creeds and dogmas, I am in favor of it. Character is the main thing, and if we can bring people here to help make good character, why shouldn't we do it?"

It was his expectation that the church would give $100,000 toward the project, making a total of $400,000 for the school.

Citizens of Lincoln protested against the removal of their university. The outcome was that a plan was worked out, by which the Lincoln school should remain in Lincoln, under the name of Lincoln college, the new school should be established in Decatur under the official title of Decatur College and Industrial school, and the two colleges together should constitute the James Millikin university, operating under the charter of the Lincoln university, amended as necessary.

Mr. Millikin on May 15 made a formal proposal, offering to give Oakland park as the site for the Decatur college, and $200,000 in money, if the citizens of Decatur would give $100,000 and the Cumberland Presbyterian church (synods of Illinois, Indiana and Iowa) $100,000.

The advantage of putting the Decatur school under the Lincoln university charter was that thereby property held by it would be exempt from taxation. That college had a special charter that could not now be obtained.

A meeting of Decatur citizens was called by Mayor G. A. Stadler for May 22, to take steps to raise the city's share of $100,000. W. C.

GENERAL VIEW, JAMES MILLIKIN UNIVERSITY

Outten was chairman of the meeting. He was asked to name a committee to direct the campaign, and on May 27 he announced that he had selected the following: D. S. Shellabarger, Harry Shlaudeman, G. A. Stadler, Theron Powers, Bernard Bradley, A. P. Cobb, and T. T. Roberts.

Included on the committee were Mr. Outten, chairman, and E. A. Gastman, secretary. Later Isaac R. Mills became chairman. Many others assisted in the work, among them A. H. Mills and C. S. Needham. On Dec. 24 I. R. Mills announced that the fund had been completed.

Altogether there were about 850 contributors to the fund. The larger contributors were:

Orlando Powers	$10,000
D. S. Shellabarger	5,000
Thomas T. Roberts	5,000
William H. Ennis	5,000
Caroline M. Powers	5,000

There were about fifteen gifts of $1,000 or more.

Within a few days the announcement was made that the Cumberland Presbyterian church had raised its $100,000. The largest contribution to the fund raised by the church was $20,000, given by Mrs. E. Thornton of Petersburg, Ind. Rev. A. W. Hawkins was financial agent of the commission which raised the $100,000 for the church.

THE TOWERS

The Elizabethan style of architecture was chosen for the university buildings. Plans were drawn by Patton & Miller, Chicago. Contract for the main group of buildings was let Feb. 10, 1902, to H. B. Walter of Danville, for $107,160. Ground was broken March 1. The cornerstone was laid June 12, 1902, and on June 4, 1903, the building was dedicated. President of the United States Theodore Roosevelt made the dedicatory address.

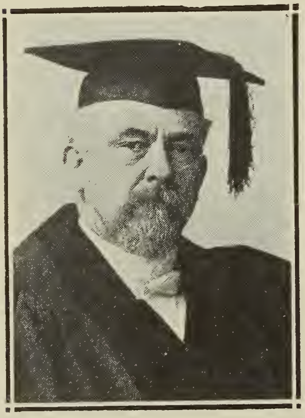
The original buildings included the Liberal Arts Hall, the Engineering hall, the Domestic Economy hall, and Machinery hall. Their total cost was $216,000.

The amended charter for the university was adopted April 30, 1901.

The members of the first board of trustees for the university were W. J. Darby, Indiana, president; W. C. Outten, Illinois, vice president; H. E. Starkey, Illinois, secretary; S. E. Walker, Illinois, treasurer; A. C. Boyd, J. T. Foster, E. G. King, A. H. Mills, A. W. Hawkins, W. T. Moffett, F. E. Bell, R. M. Tinnon, and W. S. Phillips, all of Illinois; J. E. Williamson of Indiana, and R. L. Vannice of Iowa. The board organized on June 11, 1901.

The board of managers for the Decatur college organized June 14, 1901. The members were I. R. Mills, president; A. R. Scott, vice president; S. E. Walker, secretary; O. B. Gorin, treasurer; T. T. Roberts, W. J. Wayne, A. R. Montgomery, Peter Loeb, T. A. Powers, J. K. McDavid, C. S. Needham.

According to agreement, the board of trustees for the university is appointed by the three synods, and each college is governed by a local board of managers appointed by the trustees. Since the union of the Cumberland Presbyterian church and the Presbyterian church, U. S. A., in 1906, both colleges have been under the supervision of the Presbyterian synods of Illinois, Indiana and Iowa, so far as naming of trustees is concerned. The local board of managers is non-sectarian.



DR. ALBERT R. TAYLOR

Dr. Albert R. Taylor, former president of the State Normal school of Kansas, and at one time a member of the faculty of Lincoln university, was the first president of the new university. He assumed his duties on July 1, 1901.

School opened on Sept. 15, 1903, with 562 students. Before the end of the year the enrollment had reached 712. The next year it was even larger, 764 students being registered.

In 1907 a dormitory for women was erected, at a cost of $45,000. It was named Aston hall, Aston being Mrs. Millikin's maiden name.

In 1912 a gymnasium was erected at a cost of $47,000, and the same year the Conservatory of Music was built. Its cost was $117,000.

Herman H. Kaeuper, director of the music school of the university from the beginning until 1913, devoted much time and effort to the planning of the new Conservatory building. When the building was completed, the recital hall was named Kaeuper hall in his honor. Mr. Kaeuper brought the school up to a high standard, a standard it has never lost.

Presidents of the university who have succeeded Dr. A. R. Taylor have been:

Dr. George E. Fellows
Dr. A. R. Taylor (second term)
Dr. Louis E. Holden
Dr. Mark E. Penney
Dr. Jesse H. White (elected in 1930).

Each year at commencement time, a noted speaker from outside Decatur gives the graduating class its parting message. One of the most noted commencement speakers the school has had was Dr. Frank W. Gunsaulus, who was here in June, 1912.

James Millikin did not stop with the $200,000 gift which he made in 1900 with which to found the university. He kept on giving. For equipment for the buildings he gave $30,000, and for current expenses he furnished thousands of dollars every year until his death. Even then his giving was not ended. The income from his estate, left in trust for charitable and educational purposes in Decatur, has continued to provide for the institution he founded. It paid the cost of all the buildings added later, and has given $725,000 additional on endowment. Only recently

COMMENCEMENT PROCESSION, 1912

Top Picture—left to right—front row: President A. R. Taylor, Dr. F. W. Gunsaulus, Dr. W. J. Darby; second row, Rev. W. H. Penhallegon, A. H. Mills, Dr. S. E. McClelland; third row, George B. Spitler, T. T. Roberts, W. C. Outten; fourth row, H. E. Starkey, Lincoln; W. H. Evans, Lincoln.

Lower Picture—Graduating class members.

announcement was made that a new library will be erected soon by the estate.

In 1919 the trustees of the estate offered $600,000 if the citizens of Decatur would raise $400,000, to give the university an "additional million" in endowment. The citizens fell short by $125,000 to meet the condition, and, in order not to lose the money which had been raised, the trustees themselves assumed this shortage, thereby securing a million dollars in endowment.

The report, as of March 1, 1930, on assets of the college shows the financial standing of the school today:

Endowment:		
Productive	$1,350,743.19	
Non-productive	74,234.21	
Total		$1,424,977.40
Trust funds, restricted		372,202.43
Buildings and equipment		889,691.66
Ground		220,000.00
Grand total		$2,906,871.49

Establishment of the James Millikin university has had a far-reaching influence on the city of Decatur. It has helped in a material way, bringing about development of the west end of the city. It has had a big part in the growth of population of the city, having brought probably as many as 500 new families to educate their children. But best of all, it has been highly influential in raising the standard of the city intellectually, musically and spiritually. Its professors and teachers have been leaders in the fields of education and music, and in the religious world. Its graduates have gone forth equipped for their life work and have made good in all corners of the earth.

Some institutions work in the direction of producing goods and increasing material wealth. Some promote physical and mental health. Some provide recreation and social advantages. Some strive to improve the moral and religious life. Our university broadens, enriches and develops the spiritual life of our people. It gives them a fuller understanding and assists them in making a fuller application in their own lives of the things of the soul. That is a service that is of inestimable value to the community.

No other single institution in the city can equal in value the one which James Millikin's foresight and generosity thirty years ago brought about.

CHAPTER LXX

DECATUR—1900 TO 1929

DECATUR entered the twentieth century with a vision of larger things for the future than it had yet experienced, but even that vision was not big enough to see all that has actually been accomplished.

SOME CITY OFFICERS IN 1900

Left to Right—Right top corner—B. C. Applegate, chief of police; C. W. Devore, fire chief.

Back row—Leon Sullivan, city electrician; Martin C. Herman, waterworks engineer; Adam Seeforth, city treasurer; Richard O. Rosen, superintendent of streets; James C. Brand, alderman; Isaac W. Ehrman, oil inspector; M. Fahay, alderman.

Second row—William T. Peake, alderman; George V. Loring, city engineer; F. M. Young, alderman; E. R. Culver, alderman; Will Peters, alderman; Joe Bixby, alderman.

Lower row—J. B. Siewers, alderman; C. F. Shilling, alderman; Frank M. Meredith, alderman; H. Frank Robbins, city comptroller; George A. Stadler, mayor; Mont Peniwell, city clerk; Alois Young, alderman; C. C. Walters, city attorney.

Some of the city officers that year were not present when this picture was taken in 1900.

Since 1900 have come things which are some of the biggest assets of the city today. With them has come an unusual growth in population. In fact, the population has practically tripled.

The story of Decatur since 1900 is the story of just one big improvement after another. Some of these have already been described in other chapters — the creation of Lake Decatur, the coming of the James Millikin university, the building of the interurban lines by the Illinois Traction System, extension and improvement of the street car and bus system, and other achievements.

One of the biggest improvements to this city, as well as other cities of the state, is the system of paved roads, brought about by the rapid increase in automobile traffic. Decatur is now out of the mud, so far as road connection with other cities is concerned. The first stretch laid out of Decatur was the section of Route 10 from Decatur to Harristown. It was not long until the county was crossed from east to west and north to south by hard roads.

Big projects put through inside the city for the benefit of traffic were the Van Dyke street viaduct, the Staley viaduct, and subways on North Jasper, East Prairie, South Franklin, West Decatur and West Forest streets. Subways added in the last few years are the Becker subway under the B. and O. near Nelson park bridge, and the Brush college subway, east of Decatur.

Miles and miles of paved streets, sewer and water main extensions have been added since 1900.

The building of the I. T. S. shops, the vast extensions made by the Wabash railroad, and extensions now under way by the Baltimore and Ohio railroad have been making Decatur of more and more importance as a railroad center. Erection of the Staley viaduct over the forty-five Wabash tracks on 22nd street was an improvement of great value in the east section of the city.

Much of Decatur's development industrially has been in the northeast section, and a big feature of that development in the last year has been the building of a joint belt line track to add to the transportation facilities of that area. This line was built by the Illinois Central, Pennsylvania and Ilinois Terminal raillroads. It has been named the Lake Decatur and Eastern.

BUILDING

The period since 1900 has been featured by the number of new buildings, both business and public structures and residences, as well as schools, theaters and factories.

Every year has seen hundreds of new homes erected. The best year, so far as number of houses built is concerned, was 1925, when 806 residences were constructed.

Decatur's biggest year in the total amount of money spent on new buildings, including buildings of all kinds, was the year 1927, when the total reached the sum of $5,786,465.

Before that, one of the biggest building years was 1919, when a total of $2,975,840 was spent. About seventy-five business and factory buildings, as well as several hundred residences, were erected that year. It was the year in which a number of the Staley plant buildings were put up.

The year 1909 was also a remarkable year for building, not only for work completed but for projects started which meant considerable development later.

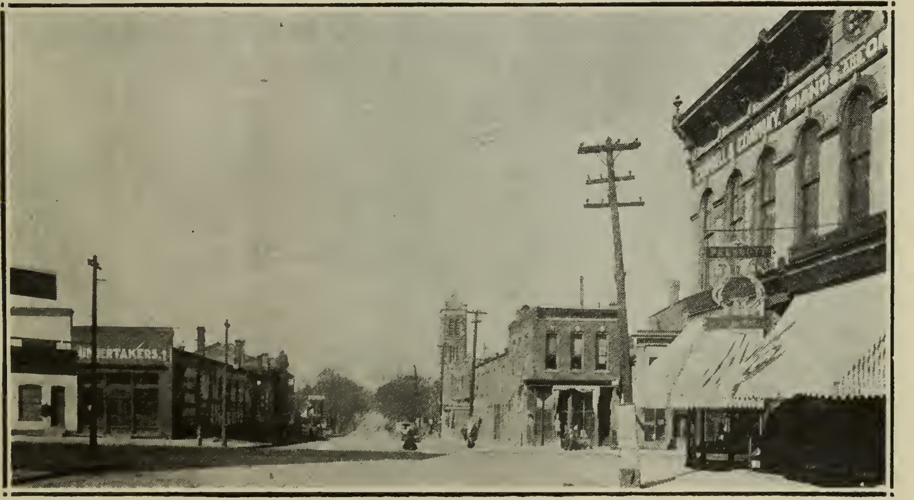
That year occurred the disastrous fire in the business section which destroyed the Morehouse & Wells company building and structures adjoining it on the west and east, the fire extending to buildings on Merchant street and on Water street. It was one of the worst fires Decatur had suffered, yet it meant the rebuilding of the business houses of those streets, resulting in larger and better structures.

In that year a number of other big building enterprises were carried out. The Knights of Pythias orphans' home was completed, the Y. W. C. A. building was finished, and the Citizens bank building was erected at the corner of North Park and Water streets.

That year the Decatur Railway and Light company spent $100,000 in improvements on gas plant, gas mains, electric power station and other properties. That year saw the beginning of the new high school project which was completed the following year. It was the time work was starting on the I. T. S. belt line, built at a cost of $300,000, the I. T. S. shops were being erected at a cost of $100,000, and the waterworks and light plant was being rebuilt at a cost of $300,000.

An important real estate transaction in 1909 was the sale of the Hill property at Pine and William streets, which resulted eventually in one of Decatur's most attractive residence sections, that of Millikin place and the 800 block West William.

In 1912 Decatur lost its old tabernacle at North Main and Prairie streets, which was torn down to make way for the Bachman building. Not long afterwards the building across the street on the Shaffer property, one of the oldest structures in the city, gave way to the new store and office building erected by W. H. Suffern, who had purchased the ground several years before.



NORTH MAIN AND PRAIRIE IN 1912

A number of buildings of a public nature have been added. The Young Men's Christian Association building, 151 West Prairie, representing an investment of $75,000, was formally opened to the public Oct. 15, 1906. The Young Women's Christian Association was organized Jan. 22, 1906, and in January 1910, moved into its new building, 436 North Main street, erected at a cost of $50,000. New homes for the Boys' Opportunity home and the Salvation Army have been erected in the last five years. The Knights of Pythias homes, the Masonic temple, and various lodge and club buildings have been constructed in the period under review.

In 1924 J. J. Moran erected the first funeral home, at the corner of Water and Eldorado streets. Two others have been erected since, the L. A. Monson funeral home, 239 West Prairie, and the Dawson & Wikoff establishment at West Wood and College streets.

A big addition to the facilities of Decatur was the Decatur and Macon county hospital, the main building of which was opened Jan. 1, 1916. It had been erected at a cost of $246,849.30. The Millikin wing, financed by trustees of the James Millikin estate, was opened in 1918. The tuberculosis sanatorium, operated financially by special taxation, but managed in connection with the hospital, was opened in July, 1923. Other buildings added have been the preventorium and nurses' home. The latter, erected at a cost of $138,529, was financed by private subscriptions, the largest of which was given by W. C. Johns, and the home was named in his honor the "W. C. Johns home for nurses". At the present writing (1930) a city hospital is being erected on the grounds.

An interesting tablet placed in the hospital gives honor to the twenty-one women of the Hospital Aid society who worked for years to raise a fund to build a hospital for Decatur. On the tablet their names are inscribed. The earnings of these women

ORLANDO HOTEL

formed the nucleus of the fund raised by popular subscription to build the hospital. Its planning and construction was the work of Dr. William Barnes.

The Wabash hospital was erected in 1902-03 at East Grand avenue and Warren street, by the company and Wabash employes for employes of that road.

Additions from time to time to St. Mary's hospital have brought it to a high standard of equipment and accommodations.

Decatur suffered another big fire in 1914 when the Powers building, including the opera house and Linn & Scruggs store, burned. When it was rebuilt, the opera house was replaced by the Hotel Orlando.

INDUSTRIES

The beginning and marvelous growth of the A. E. Staley Manufacturing company plant would be a story in itself.

Augustus E. Staley, who started in the starch making business in Baltimore in 1898, bought the Wellington Starch works, formerly the Pratt cereal mill, in Decatur in 1909, and from it has developed a $20,000,000 starch works. Mr. Staley is a member of the board of directors of the Wabash railway system.

Both industries established in previous years and new ones which have come have made big development in the last twenty-five years. Among them are the Staley and Mueller Manufacturing companies, heretofore mentioned; Decatur Malleable Iron company, Leader Iron works, Mississippi Valley Structural Steel company, Wagner Malleable Iron company, Biflex Products company, Union Iron works, Osgood & Sons company, Home Manufacturing company, Chambers, Bering and Quinlan company, Faries Manufacturing company, Polar company, G. S. Lyon & Sons Lumber and Manufacturing company, Decatur Lumber and Manufacturing company, Decatur Brick Manufacturing company, Williams Sealing corporation, Decatur Coal company, Decatur Coffin company, Walrus Manufacturing company, U. S. Manufacturing company, Decatur Pump company, Decatur Garment company, Review Printing and Stationery company, Herald Printing and Stationery company and many others.

The Association of Commerce (first called the Chamber of Commerce) was organized in the summer of 1903 for the purpose of securing new industries for Decatur. One of the first it was instrumental in bringing was the Decatur Bridge company, now the Mississippi Valley Structural Steel company.

Previous to the organization of the Chamber of Commerce Decatur had a Business Men's Association, which worked along the same line for two or three years. Its officers in the year 1901 were:

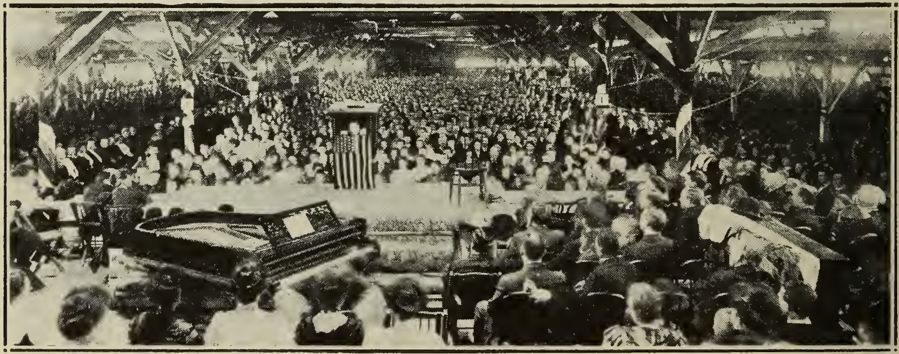
President—A. R. Montgomery.
Vice President—C. A. Wait.
Secretary—J. S. McClelland.
Treasurer—W. H. Elwood.
Directors—J. M. Brownback, Bernard Bradley, Walter Hutchin, Wilson M. Bering, W. L. Shellabarger, Frank Curtis, Will Bachman, Frank Shlaudeman and B. O. McReynolds.

When the Chamber of Commerce was organized in 1903, first officers were:

President—Felix B. Tait.
First vice president—Theron A. Powers.
Second vice president—Charles M. Hurst.
Treasurer—Harry Shlaudeman.
Secretary—John H. Culver.
Directors—Robert Mueller, C. A. Burks, Bernard Bradley, W. L. Shellabarger, Theron A. Powers, Harry Shlaudeman, F. B. Tait, C. M. Hurst and George W. Mueller.

The Association has been active in every line of community development, the promotion of good will, securing of hard roads and the like, as well as in bringing new industries. Two real estate developments handled by the association were the Chamber of Commerce addition in the northeast section, promoted in 1903, and the Terrace Gardens addition in the southeast section, during and after the World war. The first was helpful in financing donations of land to the Wabash for shops and in locating industries in the Chamber of Commerce addition.

The Association of Commerce has brought new industries to the city, and the new industries have brought new citizens. It was instrumental in 1906 in keeping the Wabash terminals in Decatur, when the railroad was planning to move because of lack of room here. At that time $60,000 was raised to buy land needed by the road, and the Wabash interests, which then employed 600 men, remained in Decatur.



SUNDAY TABERNACLE CROWD, 1908

In more recent years, when there was prospect of the Staley Manufacturing company moving to Peoria, because of lack of water supply in Decatur, the association helped to bring about the creation of Lake Decatur, and the industry remained here.

During the years since 1900 there has been a great change in the type of church buildings in the city. Old buildings have been replaced by new, modern structures. New churches have been organized and have erected buildings. More than thirty new church buildings have been erected since 1900. Nearly all of Decatur's churches now are housed in attractive places of worship.

In 1908 came the Rev. William A. Sunday revival meeting, held in a big tabernacle at the corner of Union and Eldorado streets. It resulted in many thousands of conversions and quickened the religious life of the city.

In the township election held in the spring following the Sunday revival, Decatur township voted "dry" by a majority of 1,047, the vote being 4,668 in favor of local option, to 3,621 opposed.

Two years later the proposition came up again, and was lost. The vote in that election was 4,478 in favor of saloons, to 3,940 opposed. Decatur again had its saloons.

A third time, in 1914, the proposition was put to vote of the people. This time the women had the vote, and the township again voted "dry", and since then Decatur has had no open saloons. The vote polled in that election was the largest in the history of the township up to that time. The vote stood 9,068 against saloons to 7,329 for them.

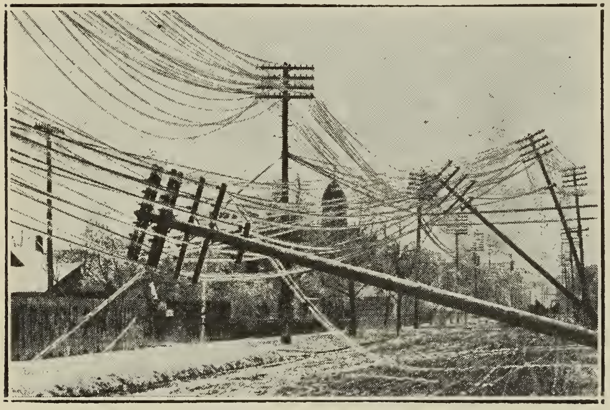
The campaigns for and against saloons were hotly contested ones. In the campaign of 1910 a local option parade was a feature. In this parade little folks and grown-ups participated, the little ones carrying banners with such signs as "Save Our Homes" and "Please Protect Us".

LOCAL OPTION PARADE, 1910

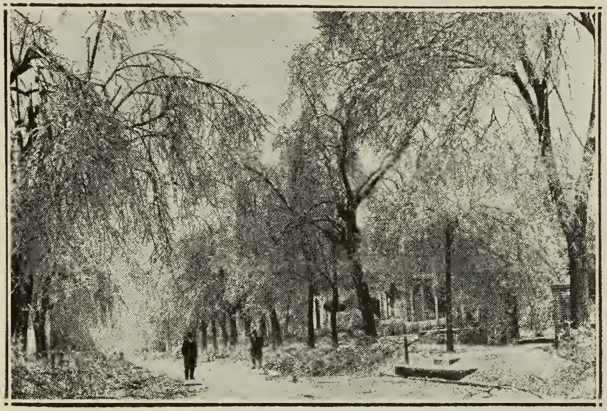
An event of importance in the religious world occurred May 24, 1906, when the union of the Presbyterian Church in the United States and the Cumberland Presbyterian Church was effected following action of the Cumberland Presbyterian general assembly in session in Decatur. As soon as this action had been taken the union was declared in effect by the Presbyterian general assembly in session at Des Moines.

The year 1912 in Decatur was made memorable by two occurrences, one the big sleet storm which came on March 20 and paralyzed the city and Central Illinois, and the other the big home coming celebration which took place in August.

Sheets of ice more than an inch thick covered trees and buildings during the sleet storm. Thousands of trees were crushed by the weight of the ice. Light poles were snapped off, wires were torn down, streets were blockaded, electric current cut off, leaving streets in inky darkness at night. The cracking and crashing of the ice-laden branches were terrifying to the passerby. Decatur had once before had a serious sleet storm, back in 1883, but the storm of 1912 exceeded it greatly in spectacular effects and in damage.

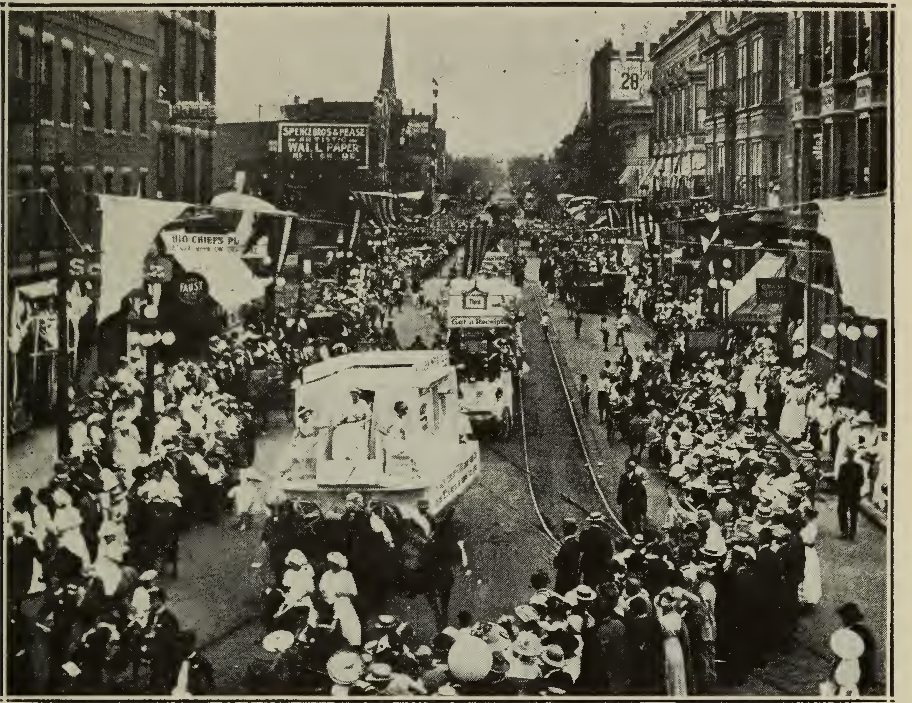


SLEET DAMAGE AT BROADWAY AND WILLIAM

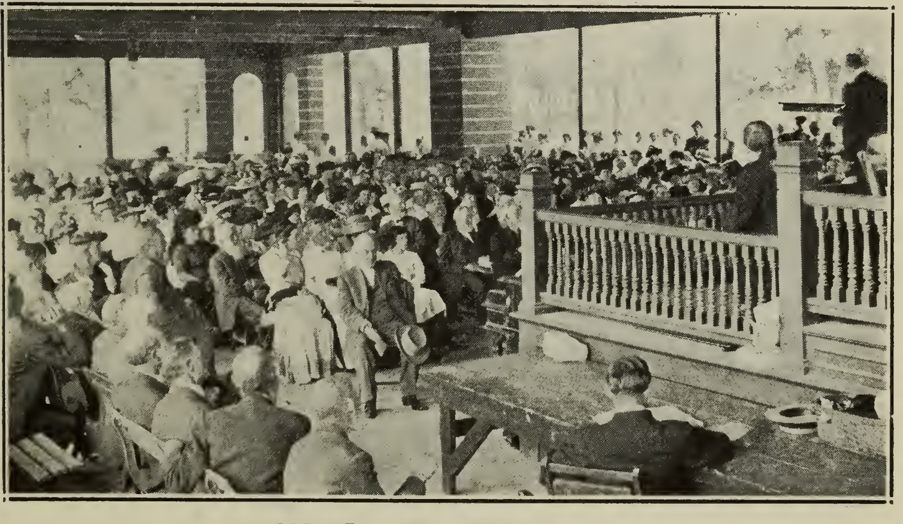


WEST MACON AT UNION, AFTER SLEET STORM

Homecoming week was Aug. 6-10, 1912. Hundreds of former Decatur residents came back at that time to greet old friends and see the old home town. Races, parade, baby shows, fraternal pageant, band concerts were some of the special events. One parade feature was a living flag made up of 456 girls in the national colors.



HOMECOMING PARADE, 1912



OLD SETTLERS REUNION, 1911

Memories of the early days of the county are not allowed to die out. Every year the Macon County Old Settlers association, which has been in existence since about 1883, holds its reunion at Fairview park, and talks over the old days. That reunion used to bring the biggest crowd of the year to Fairview, but it does no longer. The picture shows the reunion crowd of 1911.

The splendid growth in population of Decatur is not the result of a boom, but is a steady, substantial kind of growth. In the first ten years of the twentieth century the population increased from 20,754 to 31,140. The next ten years it increased to 43,818. The 1930 census showed a population of 57,511. With such a start on its second century of history, Decatur can look forward to becoming one of the big cities of the Central West.

CHAPTER LXXI

THE WORLD WAR

IT would take volumes to tell of Macon county's part in the great World War in 1917-1918. At the front and at home it went "over the top". While hundreds of the boys fought valiantly on battlefields in France, workers at home carried on in the dozens of places where work was to be done to help win the war. In raising war funds, in Liberty loan drives, in Red Cross work, and in dozens of other ways, Macon county not only did its part, but did more than the quota assigned.

Long before the United States entered the fray, Macon county boys began enlisting for service in the army and navy. It was estimated that at least 400, if not more, entered service before there was any certainty that the United States would get into the struggle. When war was declared, hundreds more enlisted, and then came the draft.

Before the war was over, Macon county had sent close to 2,500 men into the army or navy. Nearly 100 of these men made the supreme sacrfice, giving up their lives, either in service at home, or on the battlefield abroad. The first Macon county soldier to die in France was George Orville Moyer, who was killed Nov. 3, 1917.

The Macon county men were scattered all over the country and abroad, and among all branches of the government service. The only group of local men together in one company was old Company L, which became the nucleus of Company A, One Hundred Twenty-Fourth Machine Gun battalion.

One of the first groups of men named for government service, after war was declared, was the exemption board for the draft. The exemption board for Decatur consisted of C. A. Ewing, chairman; John Allen, clerk, and Dr. E. J. Brown, physician. The county exemption board consisted of Cassius Holcomb, Oakley, chairman; Henry Shafer, Niantic, secretary, and Dr. W. A. Melton, Warrensburg, physician.

Some idea of the work of the exemption boards may be gathered from the fact that in Macon county there was a total of 13,262 registrations for the selective draft. A total of 1,558 men was inducted into service. Of that number ninety-four were rejected.

While men were in training at the various training camps over the country, citizens at home were occupied with sundry war duties.

Patriotism was stirred as it had never been stirred since the days of the Civil war.

When the first Liberty Loan call was made, Macon county's quota was $1,056,000. It subscribed for $1,211,800 in bonds, the number of subscribers being around 4,000.

The quota in the second call was $2,512,125, and the amount subscribed was $2,620,600.

In the third call the quota was $1,465,200, and amount subscribed was $1,930,000.

The fourth call was for $3,218,000 and the amount subscribed was nearly $500,000 above that figure.

The fifth call was for $2,480,900, and amount subscribed was $2,757,700. The number of subscribers in the fifth campaign was 6,566.

Porter J. Millikin was chairman of the last three Liberty Loan drives.

In the first Red Cross drive for funds, Macon county was asked for $60,000. It gave $69,524. In the second drive the quota was $60,000, and the sum raised was $86,897.33. In the second drive the number of givers was 14,344.

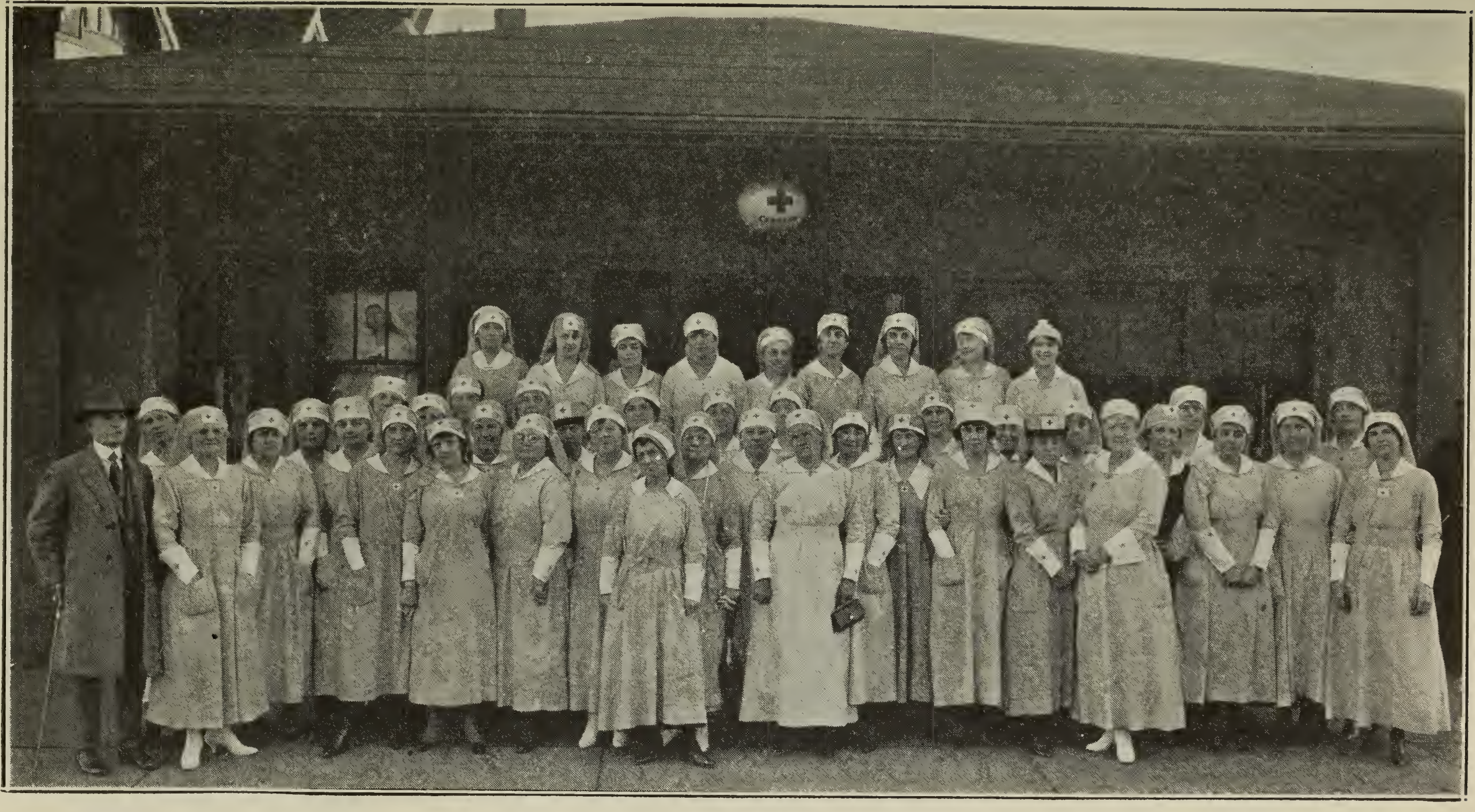
For Y. M. C. A. war work Macon county was asked to give $21,750. It responded with $27,261.80.

For Knights of Columbus work the amount asked was $7,000. The sum of $12,000 was given.

The Y. W. C. A. war fund quota for the county was $7,000. The sum of $7,275 was raised.

FIRST DRAFTED MEN

Macon county's first contingent of drafted men left Sept. 6, 1917, for Des Moines, Ia. (Camp Dodge). Nine city men and eleven from outside Decatur made up the group. The picture includes two extra men. Top row, left to right—L. N. Myers, G. E. Jacobsen, W. F. Conner, R. S. Smith, W. McCarty, R. J. Hoots, F. G. Wise; second row—J. L. Connaghan, C. Y. Miller, A. E. Trainer; third row—R. H. Lewellen, H. A. Holland, J. E. Tuteweiler (extra), L. Cooper (extra); lower row—W. E. Knodle, Guy Bundy, W. T. Mills, C. S. Bowers, B. S. Guynn, S. Morthland Jr., G. L. Dickerson. One man, William Cook, was absent when this picture was taken.



RED CROSS CANTEEN HUT AND WORKERS

First Row—left to right—Mrs. W. A. Phares, Mrs. C. F. Mattes, Patricia Hunt, Catherine McGorray (Fairlee), Mrs. S. G. Brecount, Mrs. V. W. Conklin, Zoe Carey, Mrs. H. Weitkemper, Louise Curtis (Heuston).

Second Row—Mrs. J. R. Pogue, Mrs. James Johnson, Mrs. A. L. Cantrall, Mrs. Frank Wallace, Lida Dilatush, Mrs. Adolph Mueller, Mrs. J. E. Stumpf, Jessie Lockett, Mrs. R. W. O'Bannon, Mrs. W. A. Wallender, Emma Miller, Mrs. E. F. Dunn, Mrs. Will Shorb, Mrs. W. L. Shellabarger, Mrs. M. King, Mrs. A. B. Holabird, Grace Stevens (Jack), Mrs. Edna Whitley.

Third Row—J. H. Culver, chairman; Mrs. F. J. Dudley, Mrs. C. E. England, Mrs. Robert Mueller, Mrs. G. C. Knickerbocker, Julia Nicholson, Mrs. Robert I. Hunt, Mrs. G. D. Steele, Mrs. E. Shelah, Mrs. G. E. Chamberlain, Mrs. S. L. Payne, Mrs. S. F. Deetz (Klett), Mina Nicholson, Margery Powers (Sauer), Mrs. George W. Mueller, Mrs. H. F. Warren, Mrs. Ira Hoy, Mrs. C. R. Dick, Mrs. C. E. West.

Activities of the Red Cross during the war were conspicuous. The Macon County chapter of the Red Cross was organized Jan. 26, 1917, with the following officers:

Chairman—Robert Mueller.
Vice Chairman—Max Hurd.
Treasurer—A. M. Kenney.
Secretary—Mrs. Inez J. Bender.
Later C. H. Leon became the vice chairman.

By July 1, 1918, membership of the chapter had reached 12,591. A year later the membership was 15,950.

From the day the United States entered the war, in April, 1917, until June 30, 1922, the Macon county chapter handled the sum of $151,659.44, expending all but $569.15.

The chapter's first real work in the war was furnishing comfort kits to the members of Company A.

To give an idea of the work accomplished by the Red Cross, the following figures are listed, these figures representing the activities of one year:

200,416	surgical dressings
17,860	hospital garments
13,207	knitted garments
8,868	garments for refugees
9,749	pounds of used garments sent to Belgium and France.

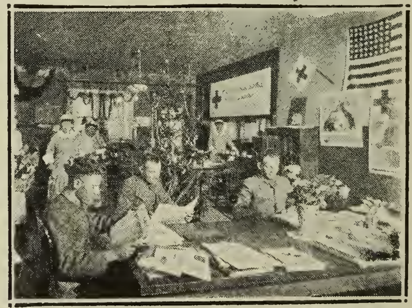
The Red Cross workers also that year inspected, packed and wrapped 892 Christmas boxes for the boys in the army and navy, spent $5,518.90 in canteen service, $5,751.82 in home service, and $4,891.74 in the fight against influenza at the emergency hospital.

The Red Cross workshop was the busiest place in town during the war. There dozens of women met day after day, giving their time and work to the cause.

Not the least of the Red Cross work was the canteen hut maintained at the railroad stations, where train after train containing soldiers was met with women bearing supplies of sandwiches, goodies and drinks. J. H. Culver was general chairman of the canteen hut.

One of the record days at the hut was in June, 1919, when the Three Hundred Fifty-Sixth Infantry of the Eighty-Ninth Division, including 1,500 men from Missouri and Kansas, went through Decatur

RED CROSS WORKSHOP



INTERIOR CANTEEN HUT

on their way home from France. Thirty-one canteen women were on duty that day. More than 3,000 sandwiches, 5,000 cookies, a similar number of doughnuts, ice cream cones, bananas and other tasty "eats" disappeared in a hurry down the throats of the hungry soldiers.

"We were here a year ago," said those men that day. "We passed through Decatur May 25, and we remember the town for the way we were treated on the way over."

But not all the men who had gone through on that first trip were there the second time. They had been left behind in France, in the fields "where poppies grow".

A busy sub-organization of the Red Cross was the Red Cross Motor corps, of which Mrs. John L. Bennett was chairman. It was composed of sixteen women.

Another was the Civilian Relief Home Service committee, composed of W. L. Shellabarger, Mrs. A. M. Kenney, Mrs. M. E. Lobenstein, Mrs. Carleton Mattes, Miss Patricia Hunt, W. H. Duerr and George A. Williams.

In still another way did the Red Cross give service during the war, a service not for the soldiers, but for the folks at home. It was during the influenza epidemic of 1918, when the spread of the disease brought death to many homes. Hospitals were so overtaxed that it was necessary to arrange an emergency hospital. This was opened up in the former James Millikin residence. One hundred seventy-five patients were cared for at that place. Not until the epidemic began to die out, did the women relinquish their efforts to stay the spread of the disease and minister to the comfort of those who were suffering.

One of the busiest bodies during the war was the Macon County Auxiliary, State Council of National Defense, which functioned in various phases of war work.

The County auxiliary committee was composed of James M. Allen, chairman; E. P. Irving, vice chairman; R. C. McMillen, secretary-treasurer; T. F. Drew, and Mrs. J. D. Moore. L. C. Shellabarger was manager of the auxiliary headquarters.

Among others who had a prominent part in the work were:

Finance—W. M. Wood, J. S. McClelland, Charles R. Murphy, Frank Beall, Niantic, A. A. Hill, Cerro Gordo.

Neighborhood committee—J. L. Deck.

Food production and conservation committee—John G. Imboden, Mrs. M. M. Eyman, Mrs. Tom Pitner, Mrs. E. W. Allen, John Hufford, Oakley, L. F. Martin, Judd Traughber, Mt. Zion.

U. S. Boys' Working Reserve—J. R. Holt.

Federal fuel administration—Wilson M. Bering, W. W. Smith, W. K. Whitfield.

Four minute men—Admiral C. B. T. Moore.

Women's county organization—Mrs. J. D. Moore.

Non-war construction—W. C. Field.

Conservation of Food—C. J. Tucker, county administrator; Frank L. Evans, city administrator.

Fuel oil administrator—M. L. Harry.

The Federal labor bureau was in charge of Thomas Davis and P. D. Aird.

Dr. Will Barnes was president and Dr. C. M. Jack secretary of the Medical Advisory board of District No. 14, of which Macon county was a part.

M. C. Hoagland directed the work of the American Protective League.

To try to list all the various bodies which functioned during the World war is impossible because of lack of space, but many others, besides those mentioned, gave splendid service, and had just as important a part in helping to win the war.

Young men students at the James Millikin university prepared themselves for war service, to be ready if called into the army. The Students Army Training corps was organized with 404 members. Barracks were erected on the back of the university campus for their use, and the boys were instructed and drilled in army tactics.

COMPANY A

The war service of Company A really began on March 26, 1917, before war had been declared, when Captain W. Lutz Krigbaum of the old Company L received orders to recruit the company to war strength and be in readiness for orders. In a short time enough recruits had been secured to bring the number in the company up to eighty. On April 2, the company was ordered to Henderson, Ky., to guard a bridge over the Ohio river. They left the next morning. Second Lieutenant Tunis Wilson was left in Decatur to continue recruiting. As a result of sleeping in the unheated armory he suffered an attack of pneumonia, and in two weeks passed away, his death being the first after the company was called into service.

MAJOR W. LUTZ KRIGBAUM

The members of the company were on guard duty at Henderson and Maunie, Ill., for five months, then on Aug. 1 were ordered to Cairo. From Cairo the company was ordered to Camp Logan, Houston, Tex. On Oct. 12, 1917, the Fifth Regiment was broken up, and the various companies were assigned to machine gun and transportation organizations. In the assignments made then Company L became the nucleus of Company A, One Hundred Twenty-Fourth Machine Gun Battalion.

Its roster was brought up to the required 172 by transfer of men from other units. The One Hundred Twenty-Fourth Machine Gun Battalion was a part of the Sixty-Sixth Brigade, Thirty-Third Division.

Company A remained at Camp Logan eight months under training. In May, 1918, the Thirty-Third Division began moving to the embarkation point. Company A left May 6 for Camp Upton, L. I., where it remained a few days, and then, on May 16, embarked on the transport Mt. Vernon at Hoboken, N. J., for France. Five thousand troops were aboard that boat. The transport landed at Brest May 24, but the soldiers could not disembark for two days, owing to the large numbers of troops arriving.

Officers of Company A at this time were:

Captain—W. Lutz Krigbaum.

First Lieutenant—John P. Nolan.

Second Lieutenants—Lewis P. Rogers, Edward J. Price, Gene E. Hopkins.

Battle training of the battalion was completed in camps at Cerisy, Grandcourt and Pont Remy on the Somme. Early in July the battalion was sent to Molliens-aux-Bois, in the British sector, where it was under fire for the first time.

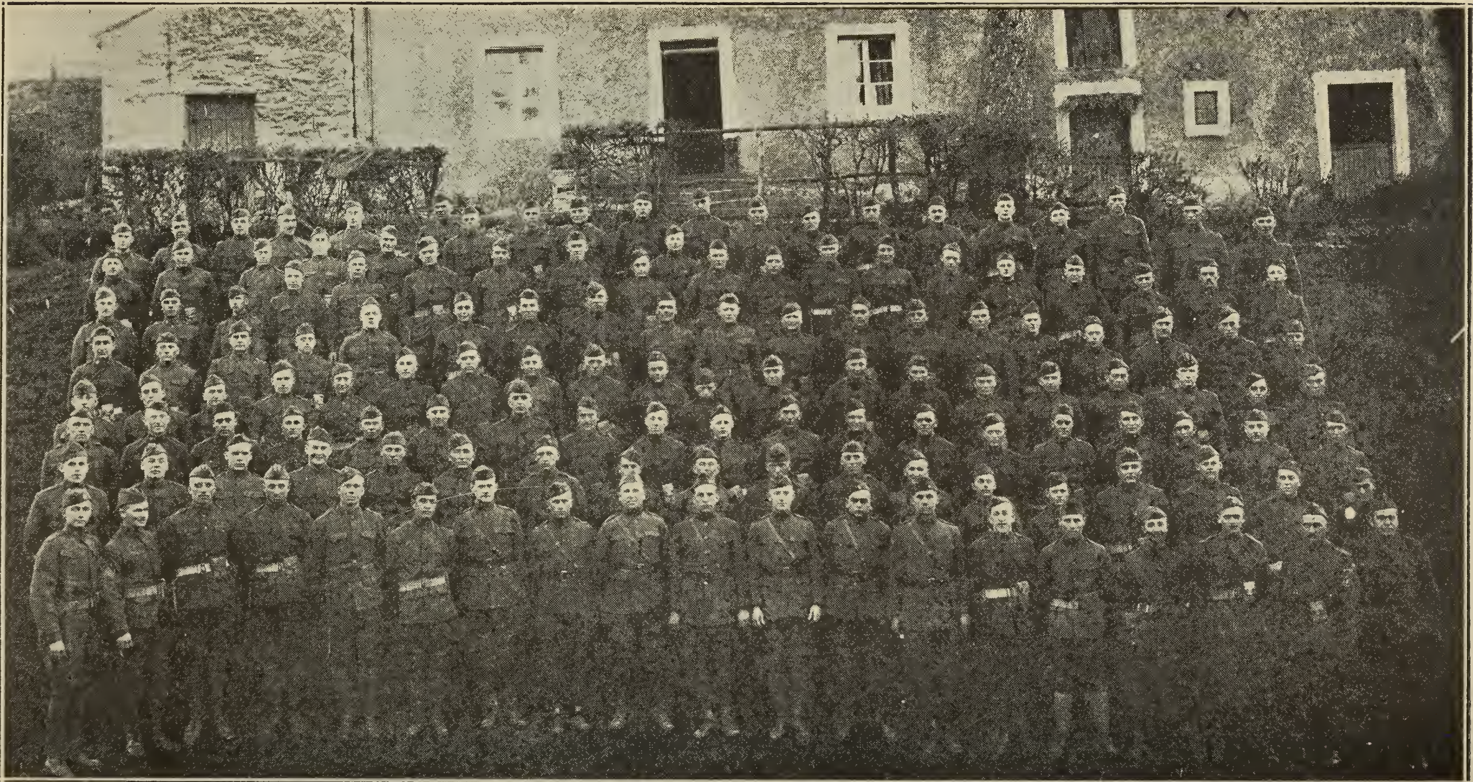
From that time on, until the Armistice was signed, the battalion was in active service. During the time Company A was at the front it was located at Albert, Hamel, Chippily, Mort Home, Bois de Forges, Brabrant, Dun Sur Meuse, Consenvoye, Bois de Chaume, Dannevous, Cote la Monte, Bois de Harville and Bois de Warrville. The two latter places are near Metz, the movements of the company having gradually brought it south.

SERGT. CASTLE I. WILLIAMS

It was while the company was getting into position for the battle of Consenvoye, which took place Oct. 8, that Sergeant Castle Williams was killed. In his honor the Decatur post of the American Legion afterwards was named.

The French Croix de Guerre was bestowed upon Captain Krigbaum, Sergeant Harold Burleigh, Sergeant L. L. Brosam and Private Henry Blasek for gallantry in action. Captain Krigbaum also received the promotion to major because of his war record, and was decorated with the American distinguished service cross for bravery shown at Bois de Chaume.

During the five months of active fighting, the



COMPANY A, 124TH MACHINE GUN BATTALION

This picture was taken at Heffengen, Luxembourg, April 21, 1919. The Macon county men in the picture are as follows: Front Row (left to right)—No. 1, Wilbur Duncan; 6, Rolla Hitt; 9, Roscoe Goodman; 10, Major W. Lutz Krigbaum; 12, Louis Brosam; 14, Earl Green; 15, Stuart Walsh; 16, Calvin Booker; 17, Harold Burleigh; 18, Ben Trimby. Second Row—3, Alfred Scanlan; 4, Earl Rothermal; 5, Frank Gard; 7, Rolland Short; 17, Harry Jones. Third Row—3, Lee Edwards; 5, Jesse Hilt; 8, Clayton Taylor; 9, Lawrence Suddith; 15,, William Holman; 17, Ray Trimby. Fourth Row—2, Herman Chapman; 4, George Duncan; 6, Herman Hicks; 8, Paul Silver; 10, Lawrence Tangney; 11, William F. Staley; 19, Earl Mathews; 20, James Davis. Fifth Row—2, Otis Taylor; 5, O. L. Davis; 18, Charles Cones. Sixth Row—4, Rolland Kuntz; 9, Paul Schikowski; 10, Henry Blasek; 16, John Kushmer; 20, Emory Gneckow. Seventh Row—3, Byron Boyd; 5, Harry Cottrell. Eighth Row—3, Dewey Willoughby; 6, Charles Sadler; 18, Homer Milligan. Members of the company who were not present when the picture was taken were Walter Elston, Harold Hughes, John Bower, William D. Delaughter, David Harris, Edward W. Golamback, Daniel H. Owens, Laurence Sutter, Byron J. Tuttle, John Tuttle, A. J. Walker, Russell Wynegar, Frank J. Dunham, Benjamin Johnson, Edwin B. McNutt, Elmer Oliver, Leslie E. Smith, Chester Thatcher, Rollie Workman, Harold Sanford, Edward J. Donaldson.

company lost two officers and five men, twenty-five men were wounded and eighteen were taken prisoners. All the wounded men and prisoners were recovered.

Company A, after the war ended, took quarters for the winter in the neighborhood of Luxembourg. On May 1, 1919, they left for the embarkation camp at Brest, sailed a week later, and on May 17 landed in New York.

Decatur's welcome to the returning soldiers, when they reached home May 31, was a joyous one. As the men marched from the station to the Hotel Orlando, where a reception had been planned for them, they were given rousing cheers. Once more Macon county's heroes were home.

The other Macon county men in the service returned at different times. Many of them also won awards for distinguished service on the battlefield.

In the Macon county court house stands the Honor Roll of the World war. It contains the names of all the Macon county men who enlisted in the service during the war, so far as was possible to compile such a list. The Honor Roll contains 3,586 names. A star marks the name of each one who died. This Honor Roll first was erected in Central park, where it stood for a few years. It was felt wise, however, to protect it from the elements, by moving it indoors, and in 1925 it was moved to the court house.

THE ARMISTICE

Never in all its history, before or since, did Decatur see such a wild demonstration of joy as it did Nov. 11, 1918, the day the Armistice, ending the World war, was signed.

It was spoken of as a "Gigantic Jag of Joy" and it was that in reality. People gave way to emotions in a way indescribable. There was no suppression of feelings.

The official news of the signing of the Armistice came about 2 o'clock in the morning. The blowing of whistles soon spread the news. Men, women, children, grabbed clothes without regard to what they were, threw them on in a second, and rushed to the streets. In only a few minutes a crowd had collected in the down town section and an impromptu parade was staged. The shouting, singing, yelling, blowing of horns, shrieking of whistles, rattling and banging of pans and tin cans—anything to make a noise—turned the peacefulness of the night into bedlam. Even the most sedate could not escape the effects of the frenzied uproar and became as wild with enthusiasm and excitement as the rest. Tears of joy mingled with laughter, for everyone knew that the boys would be coming home. In the hearts of some, joy was mingled with grief for the one who would never return.

One parade was not enough to celebrate. In fact, there were parades all day long. Later in the morning another big procession took place when the Wabash men paraded down the streets. Nobody could work that day. In fact, shops and offices and factories closed, and employes were out to help swell the crowd and add to the noise and hilarity.

The biggest parade of the day took place in the afternoon. Hastily arranged floats, spilling over with happy-hearted boys and girls, automobiles filled to the brim with over-joyed men and women, gaily bedecked groups carrying flags and banners, burlesque features carrying out the idea of victory over the enemy—anything and everything could be seen in that parade. In noise and gaiety it surpassed anything ever known here before. Those who did not parade stood on the walks to watch those who did, and to cheer as the flag went by.

The crowd in the town was growing larger and larger all the time, as people came in from the country and surrounding towns to see what was going on. Newspapers issued extras telling the news that the Huns had quit.

It was twenty hours before people were calm enough to settle down to routine life. The ending of the World War had resulted in Decatur's longest and loudest celebration.

CHAPTER LXXII

CENTENNIAL CELEBRATION

DECATUR and Macon county lived over again their first 100 years of history in the mammoth celebration held in July, 1929, to observe their centennial anniversary as city and county.

Depicting the significant historical events of the century, the celebration itself was outstanding in its wide appeal, its realism, its gorgeousness. Only the culmination of a century of progress could bring about such a successful undertaking.

One day was not sufficient to celebrate the occasion fittingly, and it was made a three-day observance. July 7, 8 and 9 were the dates on which the celebration took place.

Preparations for observing the centennial were started by a committee of twenty-five men and women, appointed by Mayor O. W. Smith, Dec. 11, 1928, to represent three bodies, the Macon County Historical society, the Association of Commerce, and the city officials.

It was decided by this committee to organize the Decatur and Macon County Centennial association and to incorporate "for the purpose of celebrating the 100th anniversary of the organization of the city of Decatur and the county of Macon, to perpetuate the history of said city and county, and to finance the same."

One hundred residents of the city and county were asked to become directors of the association.

They were as follows:

J. M. Allen
Mrs. R. C. Augustine
Mrs. Inez J. Bender
Mrs. Eugenie M. Bacon
H. I. Baldwin
Judge James S. Baldwin
Grant Barnett
W. M. Bering
T. W. Boruff
Irving Bright
Mrs. G. H. Broughton
John Budde
Henry H. Bolz
Dr. W. F. Calhoun
Miss Lillie S. Chadsey
Laurens Cook
John H. Culver
Archer T. Davis
Raymond E. Denz
Carl Dick
Miss Minnie A. Dill
Mrs. W. E. Drennan
Dr. J. C. Ellis
J. A. Eyman
Mrs. Forrest File
Clyde Foster
Mrs. E. A. Gastman
H. S. Gebhart
O. B. Gorin
H. R. Gregory
Mrs. Della P. Gushard
W. A. Hammer
W. F. Hardy
William Harris
Guy Harrison
M. L. Harry
G. L. Heinle
A. A. Hill
J. H. Hill
C. J. Hirsch
J. R. Holt
E. V. Huston
Beecher Hughey
G. F. Hess
Allen Jamison
J. D. Johnson
C. B. Knight
Carl Liebau
F. M. Lindsey
Dr. L. N. Lindsey
Clyde Lyon
Dr. S. E. McClelland
Judge J. H. McCoy
Horace W. McDavid
J. H. McEvoy
W. R. McGaughey
J. J. Maloney
John Mattes
A. M. Metzler
Joseph Michl
Hubert Mills
W. D. Moffett
Mrs. J. D. Moore
Mrs. Ora L. Moore
Mrs. H. C. Mowry
Adolph Mueller
Mrs. George Neustadt
C. C. Nicholson
J. N. Orr
G. C. Outten
H. M. Owen
Mrs. E. L. Pegram
Dr. M. E. Penney
Edward Powers
H. L. Preston
Carl Pritchett
Miss Ella Race
Mrs. T. T. Roberts
Dr. M. E. Rose
Mrs. Cora B. Ryman
Frank E. Sawyer

H. C. Schaub
Mrs. John Schudel
Dr. R. Zink Sanders
H. A. Shettel
O. W. Smith
Anton Spaeth
P. H. Sproat
Mrs. J. K. Stafford
Marshall Stookey
Dan W. Tait
Dr. A. R. Taylor
Mrs. Jennie A. Thrift
Mrs. Alice Trierweiler
Alex Van Praag
Arthur Wait
Carl N. Weilepp
Harrison Williams
W. M. Wood
Forest Wikoff

Five classes of membership were arranged for. They were honorary memberships, $25 fee; active, $10; sustaining, $5; high school, $1; grade school, 50 cents.

The Centennial Association organized Feb. 25, 1929, by electing officers. Later vice presidents were chosen. The full board composed the executive committee, as follows:

President—J. S. Baldwin
First Vice President—Mrs. Cora B. Ryman
Secretary—Mrs. Inez J. Bender
Treasurer—O. B. Gorin
Vice Presidents—T. W. Boruff, membership; Mrs. Della P. Gushard, memorial; William Harris, program; G. L. Heinle, finance; Frank E. Sawyer, history and relics.

Numerous sub-committees were appointed and were soon busy at work. Dates chosen for the celebration were July 7, 8 and 9, and Nelson park was selected as the place.

The program, as decided upon, included union religious services, band concert, parade and pageant, the last depicting highlights of Macon county's history. The pageant was written by W. F. Hardy. Contract was made with the J. B. Rogers Producing company to stage the pageant and F. P. Gorman was sent here by that company to direct it. His assistant was Lyle Davis, and pianist was Miss Eloise Wismer.

Prizes were offered for a celebration slogan. Dr. Wilbur P. Buck of Moweaqua won the first prize, $5, for the slogan selected. The slogan was "A Century Young but Only Begun". Second prize, $2, went to Clara Strong, Decatur, who submitted "Old and Gray but Young and Gay"; third prizes, $1 each, to Clara M. Mechtoldt of Maroa, Mrs. R. C. Sleeter, Decatur, and Donald Terneus, Decatur. The slogans submitted by these three respectively were "Macon, Make On", "Old in Experience, Young in Opportunity", "Remember Our Beginning".

A prize of $25 was awarded Ben Aiken for the best Centennial poster.

For weeks before the celebration itself Decatur moved in an atmosphere of "centennialism". Rehearsals for the pageant, preparations for the parade, addresses at various points over the county about the celebration, letters of invitation, newspaper stories, slides in theaters, display of old relics, search for stage properties to represent the days of a century ago, all these and more kept the celebration before the eyes of the people. Cooperation prevailed everywhere.

J. H. Hill, chairman of the properties committee, scoured several counties for things needed for the pageant.

Not the least in interest was the exhibit of relics seen in various store windows about the city. Antiques in farm implements, guns, swords, household effects, dresses, furniture, and other interesting relics drew wide attention.

Streets and business houses were elaborately decorated for the celebration. Over one store, Block & Kuhl's, was hung what was believed to be the largest flag in the state. It contained more than 4,000 square feet.

FIRST EVENT

Beneath a brilliant sky, where clouds occasionally obscured the sun, fourteen thousand people gathered on a hillside just west of the bathing beach in Nelson park for the first event of the centennial observance Sunday afternoon, July 7, 1929. Six thousand more, it was estimated, were there before the evening's program was completed.

For the perfect setting, the appropriateness of the program, the size of the crowd, the amazing interest that permeated the assemblage, the event was the most impressive that Decatur had seen in many years.

The Goodman band, Decatur's oldest musical organization, opened the program at 4:15 with a concert.

Community singing, led by Harry E. Barber and Eldon Geiger, followed the band concert.

Judge J. S. Baldwin, before introducing the speakers of the evening, briefly reviewed the formation and work of the Decatur and Macon County Centennial association, and commended the loyalty and efforts of the 100 directors, and particularly the members of the executive committee.

Speakers for the union religious services represented three religious branches. Father Claude J. Pernin, F.J., head of the English department of Loyola university, Chicago, Ill., represented the Catholic faith; Dr. F. W. Burnham, of Indianapolis, president of the United Christian Missionary society of the Disciples of Christ, spoke for the Protestant bodies, and Dr. Louis L. Mann, rabbi of Sinai congregation, Chicago, was the speaker representing the Jewish church.

Interspersing the addresses given by these men were musical numbers by the Y. M. C. A. Glee club, and the evening's program closed with a group of spirituals sung by a choir of seventy-five voices from the colored churches of Decatur.

A microphone on the stage and two sets of amplifiers made it possible for the big crowd to hear the program plainly, and the flood lights, footlights and spotlights made visible the movements of those on the stage.

THE PARADE

From the stately beautiful to the laugh-provoking burlesque ranged the sixty floats which made up the gorgeous parade, the big feature of the celebration on Tuesday evening, July 9. Colorful in the extreme, it was watched with intense interest by the thousands who lined the streets in the business section. Not only was it unusual in its wealth of beauty, but in the multitude of ideas carried out, ideas which depicted the 100 years of history.

More than 1200 persons took part in the parade. With the explosion of a volley of rockets in Central park, the parade, headed by Major W. Lutz Krigbaum and Dr. John Hayes, started to move. The parade passed north on Water street from Wood to Cerro Gordo, east to North Main, south on Main to Wood, disbanding there.

The largest float in the parade, that of the Staley Company, was 29 feet long. It showed the wings of progress drawing the chariot of Decatur.

The Centennial association's float, known as the Queen's float, carried Miss Decatur and Macon county seated on her throne, with her eight attendants about her. Green, pink and white were the colors of the float.

One of the most unique floats was that entered by the Illinois Power and Light corporation. It showed a six passenger old time mule car, driven by the oldest I. P. L. employe, William Ryan; followed by a modern bus.

Four modes of transportation were depicted in the section of floats entered by W. C. Starr, Inc. First was the tepee-pole drag of 100 years ago, second the covered wagon of seventy-five years ago, third a model 38 overland car of twenty-five years ago, and fourth a modern day automobile.

The only float from outside Decatur was that of the Forsyth Sunday school, which carried one of the long time residents of the county, Mrs. Henrietta Mowry. She has lived in the county since 1856. About twenty girls were with her on the float.

Ten silver cups were awarded. The winners were as follows:

Best contribution to parade—W. C. Starr, Inc.
Best fraternal organization turnout—I. O. O. F.
Best float by manufacturing company—A. E. Staley Mfg. Co.
Best float by retail store—First, William Gushard company; second, Linn and Scruggs store.

Best float by automobile or gasoline company—Standard Oil Co.
Best float by railroad or utilities company—Wabash Railway Co.
Best service club float—Rotary club.
Best unclassified float—Macon county.
Honorable mention—Mueller Mfg. Co., Decatur Music shop, Decatur Dry Goods company, Kane Engraving Co., H. S. Gebhart Co., Shell Oil Co., Illinois Power and Light Corporation, Decatur and Macon county hospital.

THE PAGEANT

As a stage for the pageant a platform 50 by 100 feet was built out over the lake. This was at the foot of the hillside which formed a natural amphitheater. Reserved seats to the number of 2,000 were provided, and the rest of the hill was available to those who brought their own camp chairs or cushions, or who stood. Stage scenery and properties were appropriate. Green and yellow predominated in the coloring.

At the back of the stage was a rectangular opening through which the waters of the lake could be seen. From the tops of the wings shown colored lights and a red ball topped the entire stage.

The historical pageant was given twice, on Monday and Tuesday nights. It was estimated that 25,000 people saw it the first night, and 20,000 the second night.

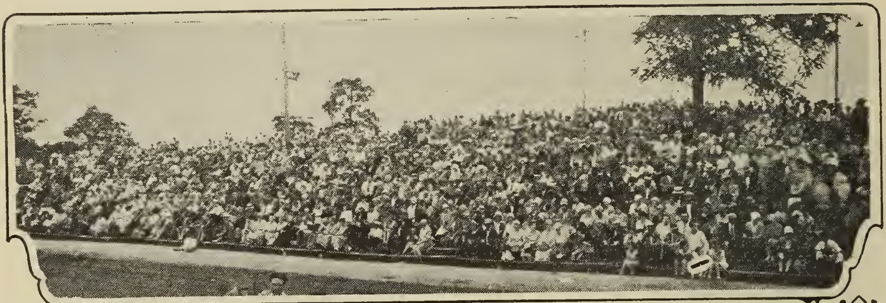
The pageant was historically realistic. Stage properties and costumes were critically exact in their portrayal of the period they represented.

First to enter was Miss Macon county (Miss Mary Bishop), preceded by her guard of honor and followed by her attendants. Her address of welcome was followed by the arrival of Miss Columbia (Miss Emily Johnson), in gleaming white, with silver diadem, accompanied by her forty-eight states.

Father Time (Charles J. Doyle) in flowing robes, delivered his prophecy.

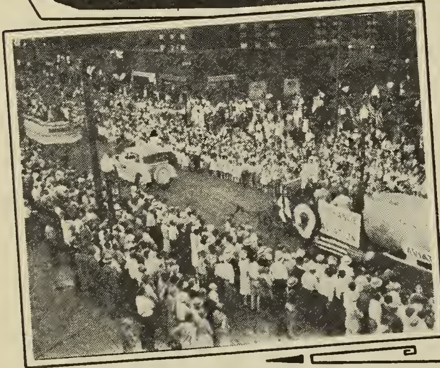
Then came the Dawn of Creation, the birth of Sky, Land and Flowers, depicted by dancers. They were followed by an Indian camp life scene, in which the Indians and white men met. Then came the pioneers, who erected the first log cabin. The next episode showed the first school, the primitive backwoods hut of 1830.

"The Prairie Settlement" was the next episode, portraying disagreements of settlers over the location of court house. Other scenes in this episode showed the arrival of the contractor with a load of logs, the whipping of two horse thieves, and "Jimmy" Renshaw's tavern. An early day wedding and the arrival of the Lincolns were portrayed.



Spectators At Centennial Pageant

Centennial Pageant Scene



Centennial Parade

Macon County Float

SCENES AT MACON COUNTY CENTENNIAL

Presentation of a flag, made by Decatur women, to Richard J. Oglesby's company on its start to the Civil war, the rejoicing at the close of the war, organization of the G. A. R., the "vision of James Millikin" when Decatur meets his conditions for the founding of a college, a street scene the day the Armistice was signed at the close of the World war, return of the troops from France, were other points of history set forth.

A special scene of the time the Decatur Musical Union flourished followed.

The second part of the pageant was the Masque of Nations, a mammoth spectacle which symbolized the spirit and growth of America. Character dancers from all nations appeared, and the pageant concluded with all 1500 participants in a wheel of progress revolving about Miss Columbia, and at a signal from the director, bursting into the patriotic hymn, "America".

Thus closed Macon county's greatest celebration.

The names of all taking part in the pageant are as follows:

Abrams, Cecil
Abrams, Mrs. Lucy
Abrams, Thomas
Adams, J. A.
Adams, Katherine
Akin, Edna
Alexander, Bertie
Alexander, Mildred
Allen, Alice Jean
Allen, Mrs. Amelia
Allen, J. M.
Ames, Nellie
Amman, Mary Katherine
Asman, Marie
Asman, R. J.
Atkins, Jack
Auer, Emma
Augustine, Mrs. R. C.

Babcock, Lorraine
Badorek, F. O.
Bacon, Mrs. Eugenie M.
Baggett, Phyllis
Baker, Marie Gray
Baldwin, H. I.
Baldwin, Judge J. S.
Ballinger, Mrs. James H.
Ballenger, Mrs. R. R.
Barber, Harry C.
Barber, Harry E.
Barclay, Mrs. Pyrle
Barnett, Grant
Barnhart, Mrs. L. E.
Barrett, George W.
Barrett, Mrs. George W.
Bashore, Alvin D.
Bashore, A. H.
Bashore, Elbert C.
Bashore, E. G.
Bass, Mabel
Batchelder, Joy
Batson, Cecile
Baum, Prof. George
Baum, Mrs. G. C.
Baum, Lois
Baumgardner, F. M.
Baughman, Dorothy
Beall, Jean
Beal, Justin B.
Bean, Haldane
Beasan, Viola
Beck, Mildred
Beem, William E.
Belden, J. F.
Bender, Troy N.
Bennett, Marian
Benton, Marion
Bergbower, Carl
Bering, W. M.
Bishop, Mary
Bissey, Mary Louise
Bissey, Morgan A.
Bissonett, Lelia
Black, D. B.
Black, Mrs. H.
Blankenburg, Wilma
Blauer, Chance
Blauer, Mrs. Chance
Blickenstaff, D.
Bloom, William J.
Blowers, Wayne K.
Boland, Alice Virginia
Boland, Ina
Boles, Robert
Bolz, H. H.
Booker, E. M.
Boone, Helen
Boone, Mary
Borders, James W.
Boruff, T. W.
Botts, Eula
Botts, Marian
Botts, Robert
Bowden, Rachel
Bowman, Lucy
Bowman, Vernal
Boyer, Sergeant
Braden, Montizelle
Bradley, Fanny
Bradley, Hildred H.
Bradley, W. E.
Brecount, Mrs. G. S.
Brennan, Bernadine
Brennan, Edward
Brennan, Margaret
Brennan, Mary Agnes
Brennan, Wilamine
Brett, Mrs. D. E.
Brewster, O. P.
Briggs, Don S.
Bright, Irving
Brinkoetter, Betty
Brinkoetter, Constance
Brinkoetter, Florence
Britton, Ivy
Bromley, Lois
Black, Lois
Brooke, Fred
Broughton, Mrs. G. H.
Brown, Everett
Brown, Floyd H.
Brown, Frances
Brown, Gerald
Brown, John
Brown, John
Brown, Phyllis
Bryan, Warren E.
Buchanan, Roy
Buckley, Edith
Buckner, Edward
Budde, John
Buhr, Lulu
Bunker, Miss Fronie
Bupp, Marjorie
Bupp, Marjorie
Burkart, Margaret
Burt, Joseph
Bush, Emil B.
Butler, Iva
Byers, W. P.

Caldwell, Alice
Call, Doris
Campbell, Helen
Campbell, Mary
Camron, Grace
Cameron, Junior
Cameron, Russell
Cameron, Mrs.
Cantrall, Mrs. A. L.
Carder, George D.

Carey, Zoe
Carmack, Mrs. Fred
Carpenter, C. E.
Carson, Marvin G.
Carter, Mary Belle
Cassell, Leonard K.
Catlin, Eleanor
Catlin, E. R.
Cecil, Mary
Chadsey, Lillie S.
Chamberlain, Dorothy
Chamberlain, Mrs. Elizabeth G.
Chamberlain, Helen
Chambers, Zula
Chaney, James
Chaney, Sally
Check, Earl
Childers, Geraldine
Childs, George
Clark, Iva
Capron, J.
Clark, Martha
Clausen, Orval
Click, Glenn
Click, Glenn L.
Clifton, Audrey
Cloney, Flo
Coay, R. L.
Cole, Estella
Collett, Herbert
Collins, Beulah
Collins, C. H.
Collins, Edmund R.
Collins, Myrtle
Collins, Russel
Collins, William
Combs, Catherine
Conklin, Mrs. Vaden W.
Cook, Frank
Cook, George
Cook, Iva
Cook, Laurens
Cook, Lee
Cooper, Gerald
Cope, Elizabeth
Cornthwaite, Matilda
Cousins, Bert
Covalt, Jo
Cox, Rosemary
Crain, John S.
Cratsen, Lena
Crickman, Mrs. Caroline
Crossman, Margaret
Crum, Lucille
Culver, E. R.
Culver, John H.
Culver, J. H., Mrs
Cummings, Lillian
Cummings, Nelson
Curtis, Sallie

Daggett, Martha L.
Danaby, Luella
Daut, Elizabeth
Daut, Henry
Davenport, Ed.
Davenport, Capt. O. E.
Davenport, W. A.
Davidson, L. A.
Davidson, L. A., Mrs.
Davidson, Dale
Davidson, Virginia
Davidson, Dr. W. P.
Davis, Archer T.
Davis, Hugh M.
Davis, Mrs. J. W.
Day, Joycelene
Day, Marcella
Deakins, Clarence
Deal, Virginia
Deck, J. L.
Deely, Mary Frances
Deister, Mrs. John
Denhart, L. H.
Dennis, Helen
Dennis, Lucy
Denz, Raymond E.
Desprea, Geraldine
Dewhirst, Mrs. Oscarine
Deyton, Berniece
Dick, Carl
Dickey, Dr. J. H.
Dickins, Oliver
Dickinson, Fayette
Dickinson, Virginia
Dickson, J. B.
Dickson, James B.
Diefenthaler, Elizabeth
Dietrich, Lucy
Dilatush, Lida
Dill, Minnie A.
Dillow, Robert
Disney, Vivian
Doddek, Marie
Doolen, Margaret
Doran, Margaret
Doran, Mary
Doran, Mrs. P. J.
Downing, Mrs. David
Doyle, Charles J.
Drennan, Mrs. W. E.
Dudley, Mrs. F. J.
Duggan, Mrs. Clara
Duguid, John G.
Dumke, F. W.
Dumke, Mrs. F. W.
Duncan, Creta Jane
Duncan, S. R.
Duncan, W. E.
Duncan, Wilbur
Dunham, Henry
Dunn, Mrs. E. F.
Dunn, Thelma
Dunn, Wilma
Durbin, Maldean
Dyer, C. W.

Eckert, Matthias
Eddy, Rev. A. L.
Edgecombe, Dora Maye
Edwards, Sylvester
Ehrman, S. W.
Eiserman, Edna
Ellegood, Virgil J.
Elliott, Don
Ellis, Dr. J. C.
Elslager, Hazel
Emerick, Charles
England, Mrs. C. E.
Evans, Everett
Evans, Mrs. Gene
Eyman, Mrs. A. H.
Eyman, J. A.

Fahnstock, Charles
Fairbanks, Myrtle
Faith, Margaret
Fesler, Manna
Fichtner, Max
File, Mrs. Forrest
File, Howard
Finley, Jacqueline
Finley, Betty
Finley, Marjory
Finson, Ruth
Flannigan, R. L.
Fletcher, A. D.
Flewelling, Rev. C. W.
Folrath, D. B.
Foran, E. F.
Foran, Mrs. Eugene
Foran, Loretta
Foster, Clyde
Foster Dorothy
Foster, Herbert
Foster, Dr. O. F.
Foster, Mrs. O. F.
Foster, Roscoe
Foster, R. W.
Foster, William W.
France, Wellman L.
Frazier, Joe
Frede & Son
Freeman, Benjamin R.
Freman, Lola
Fulk, W. R.

Gadsey, Elizabeth
Gaenr, Mildred
Gardner, Helen
Garrett, Raleigh A.
Gastman, Mrs. E. A.
Gebhart, H. S.
Geidell, Mrs. A.
Geiger, Eldon
Gharrett, Edward J.
Gibson, L. H.
Gibson, Mary Alice
Giddell, Mrs. Alta
Gony, Mrs. J.
Good, D. A.
Gorin, J. P.
Gorin, O. B.
Gouker, George
Grady, T. C.
Grass, Albert
Grass, Marie
Graves, Mrs. N. M.
Greiser, Mrs. Rickie
Greer, Margaret
Griffin, Dr. J. J.
Grimmett, C. C.
Grubb, Mrs. John
Grubb, Lewis
Grubbs, William T.
Grunden, Edna
Gulick, Mrs. Julia
Gunter, John H.
Gushard, Mrs. Della P.

Hackley, Rev. R. H.
Hagen, Marjorie
Hale, George W.
Haley, Viola
Hall, Oliver
Hambrick, Sadie
Hamm, Joshua
Hammer, Mrs. Erma
Hammer, Harry
Hammer, W. A.
Hamilton, Ed.
Hamilton, Roy M.
Hampton, Agnes
Hanks, S. H.
Harbaugh, J. E.
Harbaugh, Mrs. J. E.
Hardy, W. F.
Harkness, Earnest V.
Harkness, E. V.
Harkness, Leslie G.
Harmon, Irene
Harris, Mrs. Roger B.
Harris, William
Harrison, Guy
Harry, Mrs. M. L.
Hart, Elsie
Hart, Harry E.
Hart, Mrs. J. E.
Hartman, Mrs. W. E.
Hartwig, Evelyn
Hastings, Betty Jane
Hastings, D. B.
Haupt, George

Hausbach, Ed.
Hawkins, Mrs. Lillie
Hays, Gladys
Hazelrigg, O.
Heckel, Mary Louise
Hegarty, Mary Virginia
Heinle, G. L.
Heitz, Al.
Heitz, Mrs. Al.
Henry, E. A.
Herald, The
Herbrig, John O.
Hess, G. F.
Hickeson, Frank H.
Hickman, Furman R.
Higgins, Louis
High, L. D.
High, Viola
Hilbrant, Helen
Hill. A. A.
Hill, Elda G.
Hill, J. H., P. M.
Hill, Minnie
Hill, Ruth
Hill, Vernie V.
Hinton, Florence
Hinton, Ines
Hinton, Lina
Hirsch, C. J.
Hitt, Esther
Hoffer, Frances
Hoffer, Mrs. Gertrude
Holler, F. F.
Holston, Minnie
Holt, J. R.
Hoots, A.
Hornback, Mrs. Jane
Howard, Ethel
Hubbart, Paul
Hubbart, R. P.
Hudelson, Marjorie
Huddleston, Dorothea
Hudson, Albert
Huffman, Lucille
Hughey, Beecher
Humphrey, John C.
Humiston, Oliver P.
Hunt, Ambrosia
Hunt, Miss Patricia
Hunt, Mrs. Robert I.
Hursh, Betty
Hurtt, Helen
Huston, Effie
Huston, E. V.
Huston, Lawrence

Imboden, Mrs. B. A.
Imboden. E. P.
Ingram, Jennie
Ingram, C. W.
Ireland. Edith
Ishmael, Ethel

Jack, Mrs. T. B.
Jackson, Ethel
Jackson, Mattie
Jackson, Opal
Jamison, Allen R.
Janvrin, Vivian
Jenkins, Grover
Johnson, Douglas
Johnson, Emily
Johnson, Eva
Johnson, Mrs. J. O.
Johnson, J. D.
Johnson, J. S.
Johnson, Leo T.
Johnson, Ruth
Johnson, Ruth
Johnston, John
Jones, Burton
Jones, Mrs. Lester
Jones, Marie
Jones, Mary
Jones, Pauline
Jones, Roy B.
Jones, W.
Jostes, Fred
Jourden, August
Jourdeen, Bert
Joynt, Everett E.
James Millikin University

Kater, June
Kaylor, Mrs. Mary
Kazmark, Mrs. Leah A.
Keck, Dorolos
Keck, Elizabeth Jane
Keifer, Carl E.
Kellington, Georgia
Kemp, F. B.
Kennedy, Ruth
Keplar, Betty
Kilman, J. N.
Kimble, Jesse A.
Kincaid, Robert D.
Kipner, Pearl
Kirby, Mrs. L. I.
Klinker, Mrs. J. J.
Klose, Irene
Knight, C. B.
Knight, S.
Knight, Sidney T.
Knorr, Fred
Knotts, Anna
Knotts, James
Kohlbecker, Janett
Koslofski, Pauline
Krigbaum Electric Co.
Krigbaum, Dan D.
Krigbaum, Lutz
Krigbaum, Mildred
Kruzan, A. J.
Kujawa, Dorothy
Kundiff, Melva
Kuy, Margaret
Kwasny, Elfreda

Lake, Mary Frances
Larrick, Russell
Larrick, W.
Lavery, G. A.
Leake, J. F.
Leake, J. F.
Leber, Miss Edna
Lebo, Alta
Lee, Attorney Chas.
Lee, Jessie
Lee, Mildred
Lehn, J. C.
Leupolt, George L.
Leonard, Dorothy
Leonard, L. H.
LeVeeh, Margaret
Lewis, Charles
Lewis, Kenneth
Lewis, Robert D.
Liebau, Carl
Lienhart. Mary Louise
Likens, Mrs. Louise G.
Likins, Mrs. Merle
Lindamood, E. H.
Lindamood, Mrs. E. H.
Lindsey, Mrs. Bessie
Lindsay, F. M.
Lindsey, Kathryn
Lindsey, Dr. L. N.
Linnen, Mildred
Litts, Anna
Litts, Mrs. Martha
Livergood, Helen
Livingston, C. L.
Lloyd, Eddie A.
Locke, Harry
Lockhart, M. E.
Loftus, Dorothy
Loftus, Earnest J.
Lombard, Lewis
Long, Dorthea
Long, L. W.
Long, Mabel
Luckenbill, A. H.
Lycan, C. R.
Lyon, Clyde
Lyons, Ruth

McArty, Mrs. E.
McCartney, Mary
McClelland, J. S.
McClelland, Dr. S. E.
McClure, Claude
McCollom, Roy
McConnell, Florence
McCord, Mary Jane
McCoy, Estella
McCoy, John H.
McCoy, Mrs. Sarah
McCullough, Mary
McDavid, Horace W.
McEvoy, Annabelle
McEvoy, John H.
McEvoy, Lucile
McGaughey, D. D.
McGaughey, Dorothy
McGaughey, W. R.
McGinnis, Maxine
McGrew, Anna
McGuire, Marie
McKaig, S. W.
McKeown, Isabel
McKittrick, George
McLean, Dr. W. T.
McPherson, Mavella
McShane, Anna

Major, Mrs. Frank H.
Maloney, J. J.
Manning, Oliver
Manon, Mrs. M. E.
Mappin, J. F.
Margis, Paul
Marquis, Mrs. Ralph
Martin, Dorothy
Martin, Ethel
Martin, H. M.
Mason, William
Massey, Pauline
Mattes, Mrs. Carleton
Mattes, John
Matthews, Dr. O. W.
Mattson, Kathryn
May, Virginia
Mayberry, Merval
Maxwell, L. J.
Meis, Gertrude
Meis, William
Melrose, Prof. J. A.
Melrose, Mrs. J. A.
Mercker, Edith
Meredith, John P.
Meriweather, J. A.
Merritt, Zeph B.
Metzler, A. M.
Meyer, Dr. J. W.
Meyer, Mrs. J. W.
Michael, Harry R.
Michl, Joseph
Miller, Alex.
Miller, C. A.
Miller, Miss Emma F.
Miller, H. C.
Miller, Mrs. J. T.
Miller, Lavina

Miller, Martha
Miller, W. C.
Milligan, Esther
Mills, Hubert
Mitchell, E. C.
Mitchell, Edward C.
Mitchell, G. R.
Mitts, Dorothy
Moffett, Earnest I.
Moffett, W. D.
Montgomery, Mildred H.
Moody, Ben.
Moore, Dorothy
Moore, Mrs. J. D.
Moore, Lawrence E.
Moore, Lutitia
Moore, Mildred
Moore, Mrs. Ora L.
Moore, Ralph H.
Moore, Wilma
Moran, Bessie
Morgan, William Arthur
Morse, Harry E.
Moss, Helen
Moss, Joyce
Moss, Marie
Mowry, Mrs. H. C.
Mueller, Adolph
Mueller, Mrs. Irene L.
Muffley, Mrs. E. J.
Murphy, Rev. Jeremiah
Muscovalley, Sam

Nalefski, Irene
Nalefski, Mildred
Nalefski, Ruth
Nanna, Elva
Nearing, Turner
Neely, W. G.
Nell, F. W.
Nemeyer, Bernadine
Nemeyer, Helen
Neustadt, Mrs. George
Newberry, S. J.
Nicholson, C. C.
Nicholson, Miss Julia
Nicholson, Miss Mina
Nickey, Anna B.
Nixon, William
Norris, Mrs. Pearl
Norton, Mrs. A. C.
Nowlin, Mary
Nowlin, Ruby

Oakes, Mr.
Oates, Mabel
O'Bannon, Mrs. R. W.
O'Heren, Eileen
Oliphant, Winnifred
Orr, J. N.
Osterloh, Ethel
Outten, G. C.
Overton, Merle B.
Owens, Andrew
Owens, Ethel
Owen, H. M.

Parham, Mrs. Grace
Park, Mrs. Daniel
Parr, Ethelda
Pease, Rollin B.
Peck, Ruth
Peck, W. H.
Pegram, Mrs. E. L.
Peniwell, Robert O.
Penny, Mary Lois
Penney, Dr. M. E.
Petcel, Beata
Pfile, Clara
Pfile, Gladys
Pfile, Katherine

Phillips, June
Pierce, Evelyn
Plopper, John D.
Pobst, Miss Faye
Poehler, Mildred
Pollock, Miss Ruth
Porter, Hazel
Potter, Veree
Powell, Georgia
Powell, Mrs. Mamie
Powell, Mrs. Thomas
Powers, Edward
Powers, F. S.
Preston, H. L.
Price, Claud
Pritchett, Carl
Puckett, Iva
Pygman, Madolyn

Quentin, H. P.
Querry, Erie

Race, Miss Ella
Rainey, Franklin
Rainey, Mrs. John C.
Ramsey, Dorothy
Rauschck, August
Ray, Julian
Ray, Margaret
Ray, Milton
Ray, W. H.
Redman, Anna
Redmon, Matt C.
Reed, Estella
Reed, Vest
Review, The
Reynolds, Henry
Reinhardt, Louise
Richardson, Jean
Richter, J. Fred
Riewski, Marie
Riley, Clara
Riley, Frances
Riley, John
Robb, Earl T.
Roberts, Austin J.
Roberts, Marjorie
Roberts, Mrs. T. T.
Robinson, F. A.
Robinson, Jett
Rodgers, Eileen
Rodgers, Juanita
Rogan, Minerva
Rogers, Robbie
Rogers, Virgil
Ronan, Tom
Roney, Alice
Rose, Dr. M. E.
Ross, Mrs. Jennie
Ross, Leota
Ross, Virginia
Rosteck, Esther
Rotz, Lawrence
Rotz, Mrs. Lawrence
Roussey, Gladys
Rowe, Walter
Rucker, Louise
Ruth, Mrs. Edith
Rutherford, M. O.
Ryder, Clifford
Ryman, Mrs. Cora B.

Sablotna, Mildred
Salefski, Clara
Sallee, Betty
Salmon, Cora
Salogga, Mrs. Henry
Sanders, Betty Jane
Sanders, Dr. R. Zink
Sanford, Molly
Sawyer, Frank E.

Schaub, H. C.
Schlachter, Erna
Schlachter, Kate
Schlachter, Ruth
Schlick, Mrs. J. A., Jr.
Schmitt, Eileen
Schmidt, Ethel
Schroeder, Anna Jane
Schroeder, Dorothy Jean
Schroeder, Leone
Schroeder, Lois
Schroth, Flossie
Schudel, Mrs. John
Schulte, Joseph C.
Schultz, Dorothy
Schultz, Paul H.
Schuppan, Myrtle
Scott, Grace
Scott, O. M.
Scroggins, Leland R.
Seitz, Mrs. Angeline
Settle, H. A.
Shafer, Henry
Sheppard, Lucile
Shrever, H. M.
Shields, J. L. Mrs.
Shirk, Abner
Shivley, Norma
Shroeder, Fred
Shroeder, Mildred
Shyer, A. G.
Shyer, Allen E.
Shyer, Allen G.
Slachter, Ruth
Slaughter, Ethel
Sly, Thomas
Smith, Arline
Smith, Dorothy
Smith, Esther
Smith, Julia
Smith, Mayor O. W.
Smith, Roberta
Smith, Stanley
Smith, Zedda N.
Spaeth, Anton
Spangler, Mrs. Mabel
Spitler, Mrs. Ida
Sprague, Nellie
Sproat, P. H.
Squires, A. L.
Stadler, Katherine
Stafford, J. K.
Stafford, Mrs. J. K.
Staley, Paul S.
Staley, Mrs. Paul S.
Stalkes, Mrs. Edna
Starr, Charles A.
Steele, Mrs. George D.
Steffen, Harriet
Stevens, Mrs. C. R.
Stickle, Lloyd
Stienback, Jennie
Stiles, Frank
Stivers, Maxine
Stoddard, Sam
Stoddard, S. G.
Stookey, Mary Elizabeth
Stookey, Margaret
Stookey, Marshall
Stovall, Anna
Stovall, Andrew
Stoy, Bob
Strausbaugh, Evelyn
Strohl, Bessie
Stuart, Everett W.
Stumpf, J. E.
Suleeba, Mrs. Ada
Sullivan, Lester
Suqua, Mr. and Mrs.
Swartz, Harry E.
Sweeney, Juanita

Sweeney, Ralph J.
Sweet, Ruth
Swift, Edward
Swift, Gordon

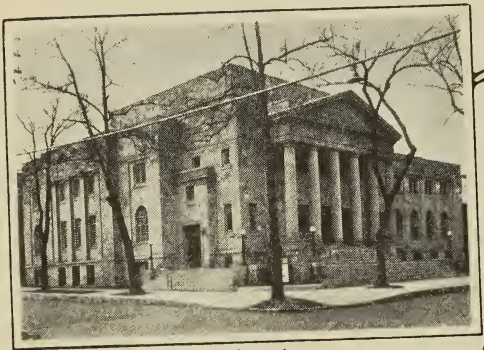
Tailor, Eva
Tait, Dan W.
Tangyers, William
Tapscott, Howard D.
Tapscott, John S.
Taylor, Mrs. A. R.
Teika, Wilma
Teschner, Charlotte
Tessman, Ernest
Theobold, Charles
Theobold, C. F.
Thomas, Helen
Thomas, Lillian
Thompson, Emma
Thompson, Leone
Thompson, Lucille
Thompson, Rosetta
Thornton, Augusta
Thrift. Mrs. Jennie A.
Tickell, R. P.
Tobski, Florence
Travis, Roberta
Trierweiler, Mrs. Alice
Troesch, Evelyn
Tullis, Betty
Turner, Carrie
Tyler, G. C.
Tyler, Grover C.

Uhler, Miss Mary
Uphaus, Hazel

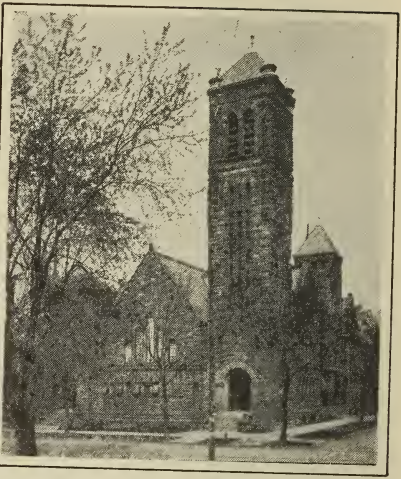
Vahe, Harold
Valentine, Beatrice
VanDyke, William
VanOrman, Mrs. Charlotte
VanPraag, Alex.
Varvel, Edna
Vaughn, Jessie

Waggoner, Mrs. Marie
Waggoner, Tom
Wait, Arthur
Wakely, Robert M.
Waldrop, William F.
Walker, Margaret
Walker, Stella
Walker, Verna
Wallace, Mrs. J. Frank
Wallender, Mrs. W. A.
Wallins, I. A.
Walser, Chris
Walter, Mrs. Josephine
Walter, Robert
Woltz, W. M.
Ward, Dorothy
Washington, Guy
Washington, Nellie
Watkins, James F.
Watson, Ruth
Waymire, R. E.
Wayne, W. J.
Weatherford, G. E.
Webber, Joseph
Weigel, D. S.
Weilepp, Carl N.
Weis, Gail
Welge, Eileen
Welge, Ruby
Wells, D. H.
Wells, Emil
Wells, Hazel
Wernecke, Mrs. Anna
West, Earnest C.
Wheeler, Helen
Wheeler, H. M.
Wheeler, Mable
Wheelock, Mrs. Charlotte
White, Helen
White, Nettie
Whiting, Mr. Red
Whitley, Mrs. Edna Kraft
Widick, Ray C.
Wikle, Mr. and Mrs.
Wikle, Charles
Wikle, Florence
Wikle, Vanita
Wikoff, Mr. and Mrs. F. O.
Wild, Mrs. Alice
Wilder, Mrs. Paul
Wiles, Hazel
Wiley, W. H.
Wilking, Dorothy Mae
Wilking, Helen Jeanne
Williams, Blanche
Williams, Harrison
Williams, Margaret Alice
Williams, Marion
Williams, Mary
Williams, Minola
Williams, Rex
Williams, Mrs. R. G.
Williams, S. W.
Williamson, Miss Eva
Williamson, Melissa
Willis, Marie
Wills, E. F.
Wilson, Lucile
Winings, Mabel
Winters, Billie
Winter, Donald
Wise, Charles
Wismer, William B.
Wood, Stephen L.
Wood, W. M.
Woolens, Mildred

Zeller, Bernard
Zetterlind, Frank H.
Zimmerli, Mary Agnes
Zink, Robert

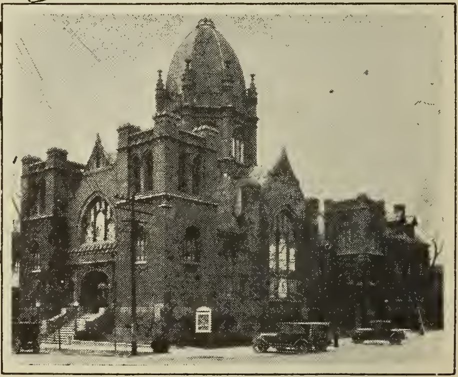


First Baptist Church



First Presbyterian Church

St. Patrick's Catholic Church



First Methodist Church

St John's Episcopal Church

Temple B'nai Abraham

SCENES IN DECATUR TODAY

CHAPTER LXXIII

DECATUR TODAY

COULD the pioneers who came to Macon county a hundred years ago see the city of Decatur today they would be astounded. From the twenty acres in the original plat of the town, containing a log cabin or two, Decatur has turned into a beautiful city spreading out over 6,100 acres. A hundred years ago Decatur had just a few blocks of streets. In 1929 Decatur had a total of 139.7 miles of streets.

In 1830 Macon county had a population of 1,122, less than two persons to the square mile. In 1930 the county's population was 81,674.

Instead of the rude log shack the pioneer built in 1829, the Decatur business man today erects a modern building towering toward the sky. An example is the new Citizens Building at the southeast corner of North Water and East William streets, erected in 1930.

CITIZENS BUILDING

Decatur, now a city of 57,511 inhabitants, in the midst of a rich farming community, has every advantage a city could desire. Within a radius of 250 miles of the city live 16,150,000 people. Decatur is a trading center for these millions.

Of the residents of Decatur 91.4 per cent. is native born white people, and 5.9 per cent. is foreign born white. The percentage of negro population is 2.7 per cent.

A hundred years ago Macon county's big drawback was a lack of transportation facilities, having neither railroad or water communication with markets. Today five railway systems provide all transportation facilities needed. The total mileage of the roads serving Decatur is 19,970.

LAKE DECATUR AT NELSON PARK

Decatur is on the lines of five state paved road routes. Two are federal routes, No. 2 being part of U. S. 51 from Lake Superior to the Gulf, and No. 10 and 121 being parts of U. S. 36 from Colorado to the Atlantic.

The number of industrial plants in Decatur now is placed at 135, with an annual payroll of about $15,000,000. Many thousands of men and women are employed in these plants.

Among the principal products are:

Corn oil
Starches
Syrup
Hominy
Feeds
Soy bean oil and meal
Brass plumbing goods
Steel
Iron
Brass
Auto bumpers
Pumps
Valves
Specialties
Millwork
Soda fountains
Fixtures
Caskets
Sealing caps
Women's Dresses
Wire goods
Candy
Ice
Vitreous ware
Building materials
Many others

Decatur is the location of the I. T. S. car shops, and of the Wabash car shops. It is the headquarters of the Decatur division of the Wabash railway. The total number of Wabash employes in Decatur is about 3200 and the annual payroll is approximately $5,000,000.

The value of agricultural products of Macon county is estimated at $11,000,000 annually.

The value of manufactured products is estimated at $51,000,000.

Decatur today has a corn milling capacity of 50,000 bushels daily.

Decatur's people are prosperous. Deposits in the three banks of the city are considerably above $15,000,000. The total amount of money invested in the banks of the city is $2,363,000. Three building and loan associations aid in the erection of homes.

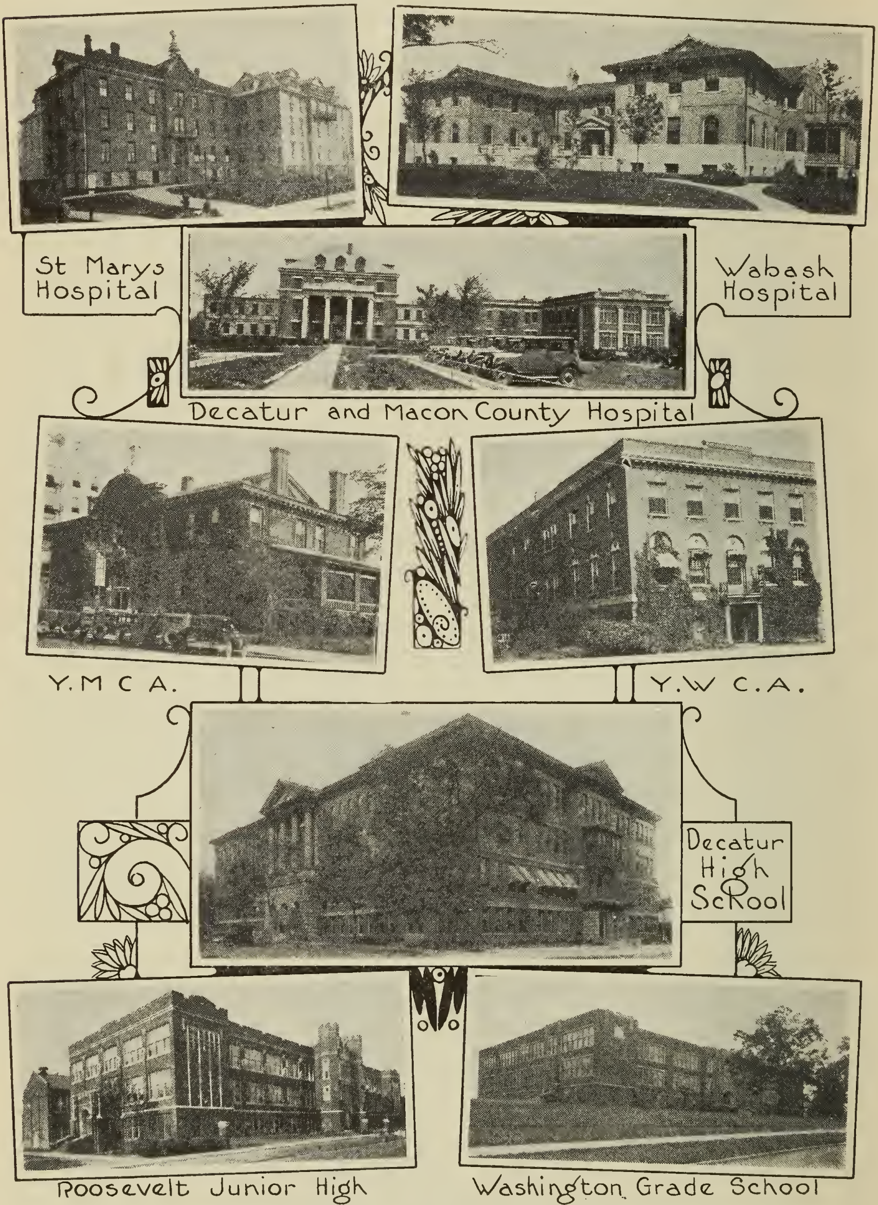
The Illinois Bell Telephone company, housed in a splendid new building at West North and North Church streets, operates the telephone system of Decatur, with about 13,000 telephone customers. The dial automatic system was put into use in 1929.

Decatur has 97.99 miles of paved streets. It has 108 miles of sewers. It has the commission form of government. It has six fire department stations, with well equipped forces. It has a well-regulated police department.

The city has an active Association of Commerce.

Decatur has a water supply sufficient for a city four times its size. The source of that water supply is a lake fourteen miles long and from a half mile to a mile wide. This lake, created in 1922-23 by the erection of a huge dam across the river, furnishes also unexcelled recreational facilities.

Total acres of parks is 810. There are thirteen supervised playgrounds. There are four 18-hole golf courses, three owned by clubs,



St Marys Hospital

Wabash Hospital

Decatur and Macon County Hospital

Y.M.C.A.

Y.W.C.A.

Decatur High School

Roosevelt Junior High

Washington Grade School

SCENES IN DECATUR TODAY

the South Side Country club, the Sunnyside Golf club, and the Decatur Country club. The fourth is a municipal course, in Nelson park.

Fans field, in the northeast part of the city, provides the location for games of the Decatur baseball team and visiting teams of the Three I league. Decatur was the second city in the state and the third in the United States to put on night baseball.

Five cemeteries furnish burial grounds for the dead. Greenwood cemetery at the foot of Greenwood avenue is the oldest. Calvary cemetery on West Eldorado street is for the members of the Catholic church. Fairlawn cemetery occupies attractive grounds at the west end of King street. On North Oakland avenue is Graceland cemetery, and northeast of the city is the Lutheran cemetery.

The public school system in Decatur includes sixteen grade schools, four junior high schools, one high school, all housed in modern, attractive buildings. Parochial schools include four Catholic, two Lutheran, and a Seventh Day Adventist school. A new Catholic high school has just been finished. Decatur also has the James Millikin university, a Brown's Business college, two large music schools, the Millikin Conservatory of Music and Decatur Music college; several smaller music schools, and an Art Institute.

Several of the social clubs of Decatur maintain club houses on the lake shore. The Decatur Country club erected a handsome new club house in 1929. The Elks and Moose clubs have attractive buildings, both on the lake shore and in the business district of the city. The South Side Country club maintains grounds southwest of the city, with club house and individual cottages, and the Homewood Fishing club has grounds with cottages on the lake shore east of Decatur. Many Decatur people own cottages located in Faries park, four miles northeast of Decatur, on the lake shore.

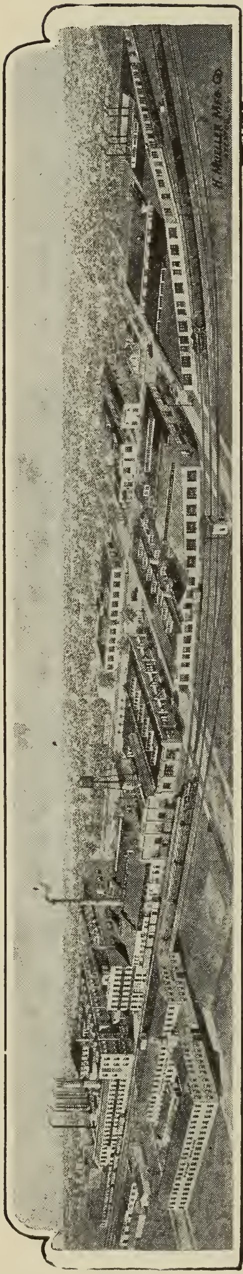
The Decatur club, a strong social organization, is erecting a new building on West Prairie avenue.

Decatur has three hospitals, a tuberculosis sanatorium and a preventorium. A contagion hospital is under contruction at this writing.

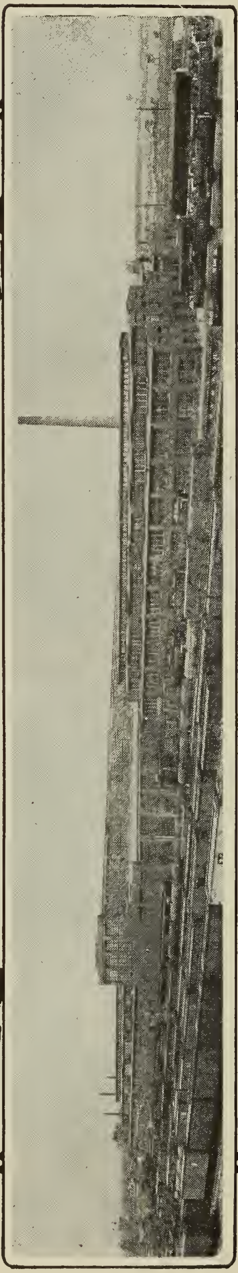
Decatur is well supplied with theaters. They are the Lincoln, Empress, Bijou, Avon, Alhambra, Crescent and Morrow's.

The city has fifty-eight church and religious organization buildings.

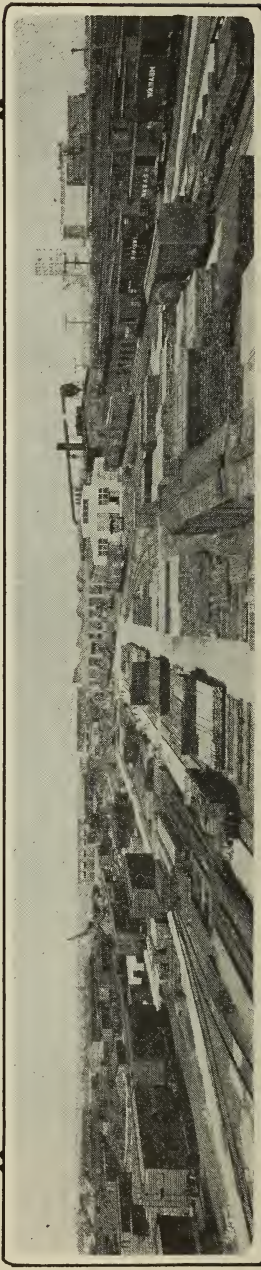
Decatur's service clubs are active in the life of the city. These clubs include the Rotary, Kiwanis, Exchange, A. B. C., Optimists and Lions clubs.



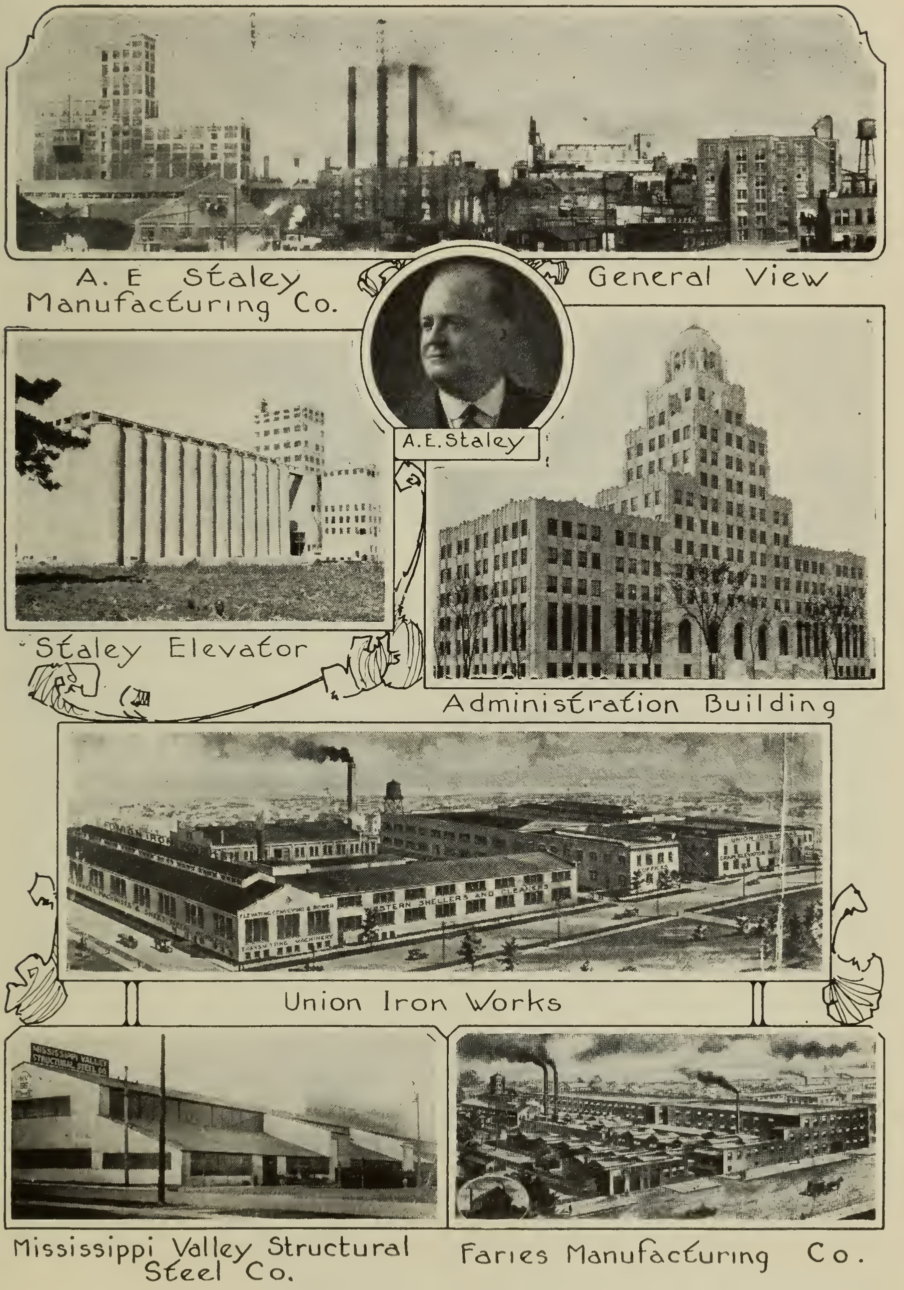
Mueller Manufacturing Co.



Wabash Locomotive Shops



Wabash Car Shops



SCENES IN DECATUR TODAY

Women's organizations of large membership, active in social and civic life, are the Decatur Woman's club, the Business and Professional Women's club, the Woman's Council, the Macon County Home Bureau, and the Young Woman's Christian association. There are many smaller clubs.

Good work is done by the Macon county Tuberculosis and Visiting Nurses association, the Macon county chapter of the Red Cross, the Decatur Day Nursery, the Girls' Welfare home, the Boys' Opportunity home, the Y. M. C. A., the Boy Scouts, the Salvation Army and other welfare agencies. Charity work is effectively taken care of by the Social Service bureau. The Community Chest plan is used for financing these agencies.

The creation of Lake Decatur made possible the establishment of recreational camps on the lake shore. Camp Kiwanis is the Y. W. C. A. girls' camp, located across from the lake from Nelson park. The boy scouts' camp on Big Creek is enjoyed every year by scores of boys. Not far from Decatur is the state Y. M. C. A. camp, Camp Seymour, with attractive surroundings. It is nine miles southeast of the city.

Macon county farmers are organized in the Farm Bureau, which for more than ten years has been operated most successfully with headquarters in Decatur.

Decatur has an efficient Motor club, which is of great aid to motor travelers.

An airport is provided for the air travelers. Decatur had its first sight of an airplane back in 1910, on July 17, when a Curtiss biplane was flown at the race track by Charles Willard, under the management of the Dreamland Park Association. Now airplanes are owned in Decatur.

Seventy-five years ago a big share of the business of the city centered about the manufacture of buggies, wagons, carriages, and harness. Today an even bigger share concerns the automobile. Garages, filling stations, battery stations, have taken the place of the wagon repair and the horseshoeing shop.

Another business of fast increasing importance is the radio, a business undreamed of a hundred years ago. Decatur is now "on the air", having its own broadcasting station, WJBL.

Many other things might be mentioned, but they are unnecessary, for Decatur speaks for itself.

Decatur Coffin Co

Williams Sealing Co

Chambers, Bering and Quinlan Co.

Leader Iron Works

Decatur Brick Co

SCENES IN DECATUR TODAY

OUR PLACE IN THE SUN

Macon county has no reason to be ashamed of the place it has made for itself in the world. It has sent out men and women who have made the name of Decatur known far and wide. In army and navy it has furnished leaders. In government positions, in banking circles, in the fields of art, music, literature, Macon county citizens have reached high places.

As examples might be named Generals R. J. Oglesby, I. C. Pugh, G. A. Smith, J. H. Moore and Herman Lieb of the U. S. army; Rear-Admiral C. B. T. Moore of the U. S. navy; Ethelbert Stewart, U. S. commissioner of Labor Statistics; Bert Eldridge, former New York banker; Roy Brown, artist; Leonard Crunelle, sculptor; Myrna Sharlow, opera singer; Charles H. Dennis, editor Chicago Daily News.

Scores of others might be named, men and women who have won laurels in their chosen lines of work.

In inventive genius our citizens have made an unusual record. Industries and manufactories have been revolutionized by inventions produced by Macon county residents. Their stories have already been told.

In the world of sports Decatur men have become national figures. One of the best known was Joe McGinnity, the "Iron Man" of baseball.

In the friezes in the Centennial Memorial building in Springfield, Ill., honoring famous men of Illinois appear the names of two men once Macon county residents, Abraham Lincoln and Richard J. Oglesby. Oglesby's name appears in the frieze honoring Civil war generals, also.

In fact, Macon county during its first hundred years has made a name for itself, one of which it may be proud. As its citizens have made good, the land also has fulfilled its promise. Today, a hundred years after the establishment of the county, no one can doubt that the faith of the pioneer in the "rich country of the Sangamon" as a desirable place to establish his home has been more than justified.

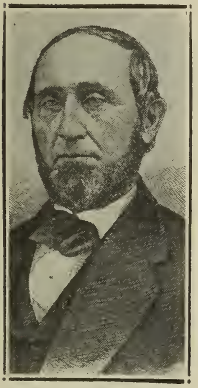
APPENDIX

TOWNSHIP HISTORIES

AUSTIN

AUSTIN township was not settled as early as some of the other townships in Macon county. The first to come was Amos Wright, who arrived from Pennsylvania in 1845. He erected his home in Section 1, this being the first house built in the township.

Five years later John Story settled in the same section. From that time on, new arrivals appeared occasionally. Among those who came in the '50s were Samuel Lowe, who came from Ohio in 1854; James S. Parker, who arrived in 1855, coming also from Ohio; and Andrew Hawkyard, who came in 1858.


JAMES S. PARKER

James S. Parker gradually increased his land holdings until he had in the neighborhood of 2,000 acres in Austin and Maroa townships. He moved to Maroa in 1877 and died in 1880. He held a number of public positions, including township treasurer, supervisor and assessor. His sons, W. H. Parker, J. H. Parker and J. P. Parker, all were well known farmers of the community in later years.

Mr. Hawkyard also held public office in the township, serving as school treasurer, township collector, and supervisor.

The first land entries were made by Charles G. Draper, who entered 40 acres in Section 1, 40 acres in Section 5, and 80 acres in Section 6, and Jacob Miller, who entered 155.43 acres in Section 1. These entries were made March 4, 1850.

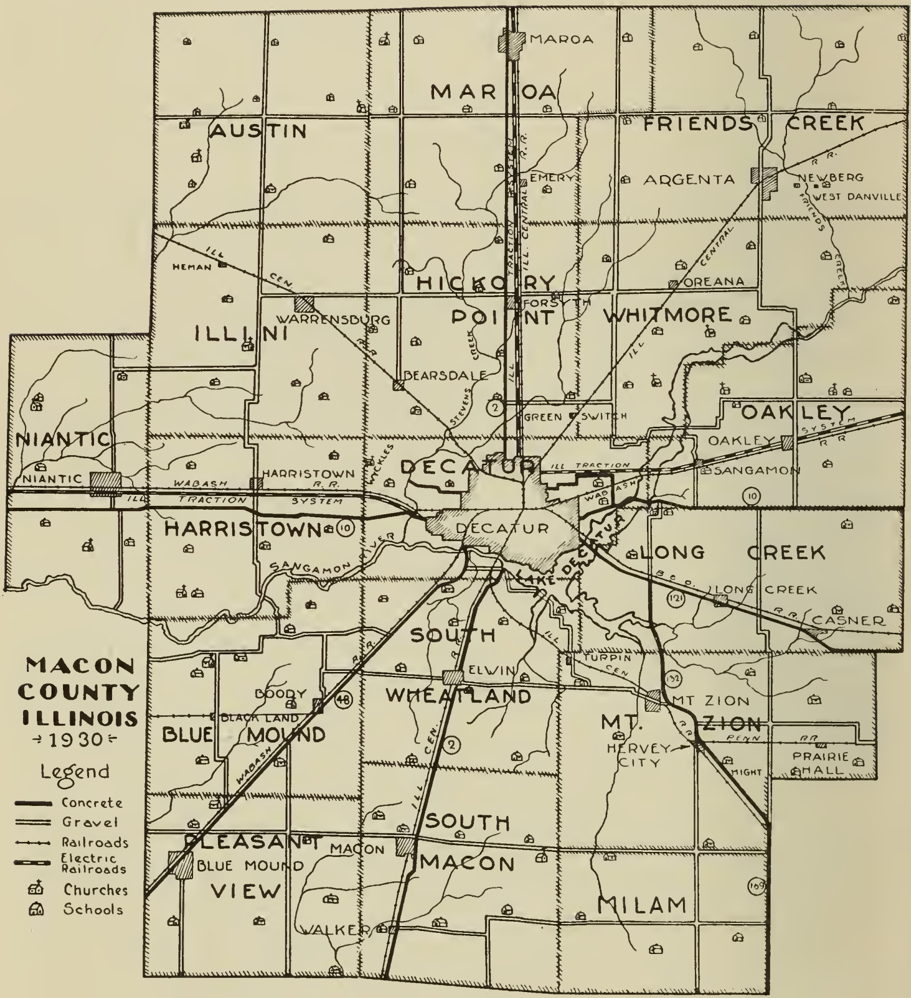
Austin was the only township in Macon county which did not sell its school section of land, thus providing for school revenue in future years by renting the land, and giving the township the lowest school taxes in the county. At the time Illinois became a state, Section 16 of every township was set aside for school purposes. Not realizing what that grant would mean in future years, other townships disposed of their land at an early day. The wisdom of Austin township, in holding on to its section was recognized in later years. It was largely through the influence of James S. Parker that the school land was not sold.

The first school in the township was started at the home of Samuel Braden in 1856, and the next year a school house was erected in Section 11. Another school, built in 1868, later became the first church in the township.

The first school teacher was Mr. Burns. The first preachers were Rev. John Moore and Rev. C. R. Robinson. The first physician was Dr. John Demsey and the first justice of the peace was Richard Ross. James S. Parker was the first supervisor.

One of the extensive land holders of the county was Aquilla Toland, who came in 1865 and who died in 1878. He became owner of more than 1,300 acres. Other prominent early residents of the township were David Patterson and Joseph W. Emery.

One of the long-time residents of Austin township was George Johnston, who made his home in the township for fifty-nine years. He died in 1927. Mr.


MACON COUNTY ILLINOIS
1930
Legend
Concrete
Gravel
Railroads
Electric Railroads
Churches
Schools
MAROA
MAROA
AUSTIN
FRIENDS CREEK
ARGENTA
NEWBERG
WEST DANVILLE
EMERY
HEMAN
HICKORY POINT
OREANA
FORSYTH
WARRENSBURG
WHITMORE
ILLINI
BEARSDALE
GREEN SWITCH
OAKLEY
OAKLEY
NIANTIC
NIANTIC
HARRISTOWN
DECATUR
SANGAMON
WABASH R.R.
ILL TRACTION SYSTEM
HARRISTOWN
DECATUR
LONG CREEK
LONG CREEK
SANGAMON RIVER
LAKE DECATUR
CASNER
SOUTH WHEATLAND
TURPIN
ELWIN
BOODY
BLACK LAND
MT ZION
MT. ZION
BLUE MOUND
HERVEY CITY
PRAIRIE HALL
HIGHT
SOUTH MACON
PLEASANT VIEW
MACON
BLUE MOUND
WALKER
MILAM
ILL. CENTRAL R.R.
B. & O. R.R.
PENN R.R.
10
2
48
121
132
109

Johnston was active in politics, and served as chairman of this county for the Woodrow Wilson foundation. He was a great admirer of Robert Burns, Scotch poet, and was the founder of the Robert Burns cabinet in the Elizabethan study at the James Millikin university.

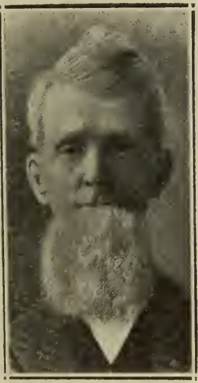
HARMONY U. B. CHURCH

Austin township has no railroads, and no villages or towns. A center of community life is the Harmony United Brethren church. Within recent years this church has been improved extensively, and the basement has been fitted up for community events. Not only church gatherings, but rural school graduation exercises and other public events take place at this church. The church was organized about fifty years ago, and first met in Mud Chapel school house, about a mile south of the present location of the church. The present building used by the congregation was erected about the year 1902.

BLUE MOUND

WILLIAM WARNICK, who later became the first sheriff of Macon county, and his family were the first arrivals in Blue Mound township, coming in the year 1824. An account of Mr. Warnick is given in an early chapter in this history.

Benjamin Wilson, native of North Carolina, another man prominently identified with the early history of the county, came from Tennessee in the year 1827. He was one of the first county commissioners. Mr. Wilson was a brother-in-law of William Warnick.



WILLIAM T. MOFFETT

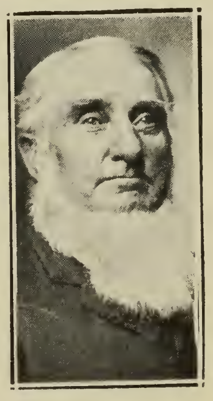
Dempsey Pope came from Tennessee, also in 1827. He located on Mosquito creek. Mr. Pope also was a native of North Carolina.

In 1830 came Garland Hall from Kentucky. He settled about two miles north of the village of Blue Mound.

Others who came at an early date were Wyett Cherry, William Pope, James Y. Taylor, Joseph Austin, Benjamin R. Austin, William A. Austin, W. F. Muirhead, John B. Moffett, and Vinson Morris.

William T. Moffett, son of John B. Moffett, settled in the township in 1841 and afterwards became prominent in affairs of the county and state. He held the office of supervisor a number of times, was elected to the state legislature, was named a member of the state board of equalization, and became state senator.

Many additions were made to the township's list of citizens in the '50s. Among them were John H. Sleeter, George F. Cottle, Henry T. Brown, Frederick Bailey, John Pistorius, E. W. Crow, Henry Josser, W. H. Weatherford and E. F. Delbridge.



JOHN PISTORIUS

Frederick Bailey and John Pistorius, natives of Germany, came to this country together in 1853 and settled in the same township. They began farming together. By and by each bought land. Gradually they added to their land holdings until both were owners of hundreds and hundreds of acres. Both lived to old age, and they died within about a year of each other, Mr. Bailey passing away in 1909, and Mr. Pistorius in 1910.

The first land entered in Blue Mound township was on March 16, 1833, when James Edwards entered 40 acres in Section 20. Others who entered land early were Garland Hall, Dempsey Pope, Benjamin Wilson and Francis G. Hill.

The first child born in the township was Willis Z. Pope, son of Dempsey Pope. The first death was that of Nancy Wilson, daughter of Benjamin Wilson. She died in 1828. The first couple married were Benjamin Austin and Margaret Warnick, who became man and wife probably in 1825.

Benjamin R. Austin was the first justice of the peace. Mr. Austin, who was a surveyor, was honored in later years by having Austin township named for him.

The first church organization in the township was the Blue Mound Methodist society, started in 1829 or 1830. A chapel was erected in 1863. The first preacher to locate in the township was Rev. H. A. Pasley, who came in 1834 from Kentucky. He was a Methodist minister, and church services were held in his home many years.

The first church building erected in the township was known as the Mosquito church. It was near Mosquito creek, in Section 20.

In 1855 German Methodists organized a church at the home of William Sleeter. Rev. Philip Kuhl led in the organization. In 1865 a building was erected.

The Madison Presbyterian church was organized in 1854 by Rev. John C. Smith. Some of its members had formerly belonged to the Bethlehem church, which Mr. Smith had organized in 1850.

According to report, the first school in the township was taught as early as 1828 by Daniel McCall. William Austin taught the school in 1832. One of the early schools was the Peru school. A big oak tree, near this school, under which Abraham Lincoln often rested in the shade, was dedicated May 5, 1910, to the Grand Army of the Republic. The Peru school often had unruly pupils, and stories still are told of the days when Frank H. Coleman, six feet tall and of strong build, took charge and tamed them.

J. C. Armstrong was the first supervisor from the township. Other early supervisors were William T. Moffett, F. A. Brown, R. H. Hill, D. F. Barber, Frank H. Coleman and H. H. Rosengrants.

The town of Boody was laid out in Sections 11 and 12 in 1870 by Messrs. Nientker and Smith. A postoffice was established, and Fred Nientker became postmaster. In after years his son, W. G. Nientker, held the same position.

The first house in the town was erected in 1870 by Frank Reafly. Mr. Nientker erected and opened the first store in 1870. In 1871 the Binkley elevator was built. The first schoolhouse was erected in 1874 and Byron Lewis was the first teacher. Another early teacher was T. D. Weems. The first physician was Dr. A. C. Douglas.

Boody did not grow much in size, but it became an important shipping point for grain, being in the midst of a good farming community. It is on the Wabash railroad, and on State Route No. 48 hard road.

DECATUR

THE history of Decatur township is largely the history of Decatur, so only brief mention will be made here of this township. The first land entries were made before Decatur had been laid out. James Miller was the first to enter land. On Nov. 13, 1827, he entered 80 acres in Section 10. Jonathan Miller entered 80 acres in Section 14, July 7, 1828. Dorus Stevens entered 80 acres in Section 3 July 16, 1828, and the same day David Miller entered 80 acres in the same section. On Nov. 1, 1828, David L. Allen entered 80 acres in Section 14. Nearly all of this land is now inside the city limits of Decatur.

Early settlers in this township, who were prominently connected with the early history of the county, are listed in early chapters in this volume. Much of the land they purchased afterwards was absorbed into the city of Decatur.

When Macon county was divided into townships in 1860, Henry B. Durfee was named as the first supervisor from Decatur township. He also was chosen as chairman of the Board. Decatur township at first had one supervisor and one assistant supervisor. As the population increased, the number of assistant supervisors increased until now the township has eighteen assistant representatives on the board.

JOHN SAWYER HOME

Decatur township has an area of 18,560 acres, or 29 square miles.

One of the old homes of the township, now in the city, is the John Sawyer home on West Harrison avenue. This house, which is still standing, was built about 1848 by Levi Gulick. Afterwards it came into possesion of Mr. Sawyer, and it was his home for forty years.

FRIEND'S CREEK

FRIEND'S CREEK took its name from the first settler on its banks, George W. Friend, native of Ohio, who came in 1822 and built the first log house in what afterwards became Friend's Creek township. His cabin was about two miles north and a mile east of Argenta. It was the third home in the county, the other two being those of William Downing and Leonard Stevens. Mr. Friend stayed in the community only a few years, but his name has remained, in the name of the creek and the township.

Next to come was Charles Nelson, who settled in Section 12, about a mile north of Friend's cabin, in 1824. He came from Kentucky. Nelson became a permanent resident, and many of his descendants still live in the vicinity.

Nathan Burril also came in 1824, moving from Ohio. He settled near the Friend cabin. Other early comers were Josiah Abrams and William Dickey, who settled in 1828 in Section 24. William Dickey had been a Revolutionary soldier. He died in 1832 and was buried in Friend's Creek cemetery. In 1912 a bronze marker was placed on his grave by Stephen Decatur chapter, Daughters of the American Revolution.

Mr. Dickey had a large family, and several of his sons took up land. One son, John Dickey, became the first justice of the peace, in 1836, and held the office until he died ten years later. His brother, Andrew Dickey, succeeded him as justice of the peace.

The Pettyjohns, the Wilsons, Nathaniel Brown, John and Joseph Long, Jacob Snyder, John Lowrie, David Chapman, Israel Fout, George Carver, the Jimison brothers, Andrew Corn, the Beebees and the Robinsons were among the arrivals in the '30s. Later came Alexander Greenfield, George S. Young, James Querrey, Joseph G. Kile, Hugh O'Neil, John A. Scott, David Troxell, the Brennans and numerous others.

John and Joseph Long, who were cousins, invested all their money in land. They continued to add to their holdings until they had as much as 2,000 acres each.

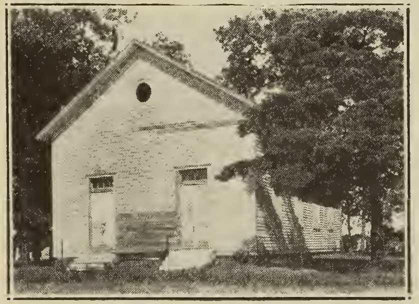
The Pettyjohn family furnished the first bride in the township, Susan Pettyjohn marrying Levi Abrams. They not only had the distinction of being the first couple married in the township, but their son, Eli Abrams, born in 1829, was the first child born in the township.

One of the influential early residents was David K. Wilson, who came from Tennessee in 1844. He was a leader in the Cumberland Presbyterian church, and was a man of interesting personality. In 1858 Mr. Wilson and Andrew Dickey made brick, from which they built their own houses. These houses stood as landmarks for many years.

Josiah Abrams made the first land entry in the township. He entered 80 acres in Section 24 Aug. 28, 1830. Elizabeth Stephenson entered land in the same section March 25, 1831. The land taken up by William Dickey May 2, 1831, also was in Section 24.

The first school house in the township was built in 1835. It was in the northeast corner of Section 25. John Heath was the first teacher.

Rev. William Owens delivered the first sermon in the township. For many years religious services were held at the camp meeting ground, and then a log school house was used for church purposes. Among the preachers at the camp meetings were William Magee Taylor, Abner Lansden, Robert Taylor, Neily Johnson and John Berry.



OLD C. P. CHURCH NEAR ARGENTA

About 1851 a Cumberland Presbyterian church was organized, and a building was erected near the cemetery. This building was destroyed by fire, and in 1873 another building was put up. It still stands, though used now only for funeral services. One of the leaders for years in this church was Jackson Wilkinson, a man of fine character and the head of a large and interesting family.

In 1849 a Methodist society was organized by Rev. C. W. Lewis and a building was erected near Friend's Creek in 1859.

About 1858 or 1859 the United Brethren church erected a building in Newburg. It was moved to Argenta about 1885.

Before the days of the railroad, the village of Newburg, laid out in 1854, was the center of the community. William Dowling had the first store in that village, and Philip Carver the first blacksmith shop. Early physicians were Dr. Millison, Dr. Gueren, Dr. H. O. Hetzel, and Dr. W. B. Hostetler. Dr. R. F. Carr came in 1856. Dr. Charles Dennison practiced medicine there for some years. He was a surgeon in the army during the Civil war. A schoolhouse was erected in 1854. One of the early teachers there was Jasper Wilkinson, who afterwards became principal of the Decatur high school.

Both Newburg and West Danville, commonly known as Dantown, once flourishing villages, are now practically gone, due to the fact that the railroad passed them by. After the railroad was built through the township in the '70s the village of Argenta was laid out by B. R. Rodgers. Located on a railroad line, it naturally drew all the business away from the other towns. Only a few wrecks of houses remain at Newburg, and the old distillery is the only reminder left of Dantown.

The first store in Argenta was erected by Garver & Co. B. S. Schall was the first blacksmith, and F. F. McMullin had the first wagon shop. In 1874 a school house was built. Argenta was incorporated as a village Jan. 29, 1891.

David K. Wilson was the first supervisor from Friend's Creek township. Other early supervisors were C. Lukens, Andrew Dickey, William Daves, S. Payne, F. Swantes, John Marsh, R. H. Park, J. Ruddock, J. W. Brown and W. A. VanLeer.

HARRISTOWN

WILLIAM HANKS, relative of Abraham Lincoln, was the first man to locate in Harristown township. He came in 1828, and built his cabin and made other improvements in Section 23.

The same year Christopher Miller came from Kentucky, and located in Section 14. His sons, Samuel, William and John, came with him and located homes nearby. James Miller came from Kentucky in 1829. James Harrell, another

Kentuckian, arrived in 1834. In the year 1835 Jacob Hostetler located in Section 14. J. W. Gouge came in 1836 from New York.

John Miller was the first to enter land in the township. On Dec. 2, 1828, he entered 80 acres in Section 13.

As early as 1830 a school was taught in the eastern part of the township by William Miller. About 1841 a school building was erected in Section 13. It served both school and church purposes for a good many years.

The township's most distinguished resident was Abraham Lincoln, who came to Macon county in 1830. The Lincoln cabin home, which Abraham helped to build, was located on a bluff along the Sangamon, in Section 28.

The land on which the Lincoln cabin stood was afterwards owned by the Whitley family. Shelton Whitley came to Macon county in 1831 with the Dr. Speer and Snyder families. He was a carpenter. Mr. Whitley erected a mill on the Sangamon in Harristown township, this being one of the earliest mills in the county. Often the millwheel was clogged with fish. Shelton Whitley bought this land in Section 28 in 1843 from Perry Strickland, who had entered it from the government on May 31, 1836. It afterward passed to his brother, James Whitley, and is still in possession of the latter's descendants.

In 1837 Samuel and James Miller built a mill on the Sangamon in Section 24. They also had a blacksmith shop there.

After the Wabash railroad was built through the township, the village of Harristown was laid out. It was platted in 1856 by Jerden Burkey in Sections 9 and 10. The first house in the village was built by Jacob I. Hobbs in 1856. The first postmaster was David Masters. The first store was opened by Samuel Cox in 1859. The first blacksmith was H. C. Masters. Summit lodge, No. 431, A. F. and A. M., was chartered Oct. 4, 1865.

A schoolhouse was erected in Harristown in 1863, and school was taught by John S. Randle, who had been teaching in the neighborhood since 1861.

The Christian church was organized March 15, 1861. Services were held in an old church building, which had been moved the year previous from a few miles southeast of the town. Rev. W. A. Mallory led in the organization of the church, and was the first preacher. In 1917 the congregation erected the handsome brick edifice in use today. It was dedicated Dec. 23, 1917.

The Methodist church was organized in 1863, and erected a building the following year. W. C. Lapham was the first pastor.

In 1865 an elevator was built by O. Z. Greene.

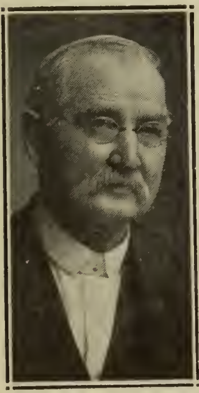
In 1876 a tile works was erected in Section 21 by J. Traver.

The first justice of the peace in Harristown township was Nathan Averitt. The first physician was Dr. Greeley. The first supervisor from the township was Abraham Eyman. Other early supervisors were J. H. Pickrell, J. B. Hanks, M. G. Camron, W. E. Gouge and J. N. Hoyt. J. H. Pickrell became widely known as a breeder of fine stock.

Among the prominent early settlers who came in the '50s were J. G. Willard, C. E. Hunsley, A. B. Camp, and J. D. McGuire. Jeremiah Freeman, a native born Macon county resident, was another. Daniel Stookey came about 1860.

One of Harristown township's most widely known longtime residents was T. J. Scroggin, who settled in the township about 1864, and lived there until his death in 1911. Mr. Scroggin was an extensive land holder, owning more than 1,600 acres. He was known particularly as a most successful breeder of fine cattle. Mr. Scroggin's fondness for animals resulted in his maintenance for a long time of a deer park, where he kept a big herd of deer.

The village of Harristown is known for its beautiful cemetery and attractive homes. The Illinois Traction System line passes through the village and the State Route 10 hard road gives it connection with other points for automobile traffic.



T. J. SCROGGIN

HICKORY POINT

DAVID FLOREY, of Virginia, was the first settler in Hickory Point township. He came in 1825 and settled in the timber on the west branch of Stevens creek. Philip D. Williams arrived in 1826 and John Draper came about a year later. Both Florey and Draper moved in 1828 to Whitmore township. Williams moved to Decatur after the town was laid out in 1829. He was a justice of the peace.

John and James Hanks, Stephen Shepherd, David and John Manley, all of Kentucky, were other early comers. They all made land entries and became long time residents of the community.

The first to enter land in the township was Randolph Rose, who entered 80 acres in Section 32, on Feb. 5, 1830. The same day James Johnson entered 80 acres in Section 34. William Lemon entered 80 acres in Section 32 June 5, 1830.

In the early '30s came William F. Montgomery and his brother, George Montgomery, of Virginia, Samuel Hornback and Robert Johnson and James Johnson of Kentucky. Richard Brett of Virginia, John and Hezekiah Hays, brothers, of Ohio, Joseph Rife, sr., and John Good of Pennsylvania arrived a few years later. Between 1840 and 1855 many settlers came from Pennsylvania and became permanent residents. Among them were Jacob Schroll, Solomon Weigel, John Weigel, Daniel Weigel, David Houser, Jacob Gepford, Jacob Keller, Peter Keister, Samuel Weaver, William Lourash, Alexander Mettlin, Henry Lehman, Jacob Rife and Joseph Rife, jr.

Others who came during the early years of the county were George W. Schroll, Henry Schroll, Ephriam Bear, Jacob Bear, W. H. Gepford, W. T. Grubbs, Mrs. Nancy Weaver, David Brett, N. S. Batchelder and Hilleary Major.

After the building of the railroad, the township became attractive to some Decatur citizens for we find Samuel McKinley, A. L. Stewart, John Renshaw, Samuel Smallwood, J. Y. Braden, Ulysses Huston, John Sawyer, jr., H. B. Durfee and A. C. Gher all left the town for the country.

The first couple married in Hickory Point township were Zebedee Sergeant and Nancy Manley. The first child born was Sarah J. Smallwood, July 27, 1827.

The first blacksmith shop was opened in 1828 by James Johnson, who afterwards went to the Black Hawk war and became a colonel.

Church services were held first in the cabins and barns of settlers. After camp meetings became popular, ground near Boiling Springs was used as a camp ground.

Many of the settlers from Pennsylvania were members of the Church of God and wished to have a church of that persuasion in their new home. On Jan. 3, 1852, a protracted meeting was commenced in Joseph Rife's brick residence near Boiling Springs, conducted by Thomas Hickernell of Ohio and George Sandoe of Pennsylvania, missionaries. It resulted in the organization of a church Jan. 17, 1852, in the home of Mr. and Mrs. Rife, there being nineteen charter members. Joseph Rife, Sr., and Jacob Schroll were the elders and Joseph Rife, Jr., and David Houser, deacons.

In the same house, the ministers of the church in Illinois met on Aug. 23, 1853, and organized the Illinois Eldership of the Churches of God.

MR. AND MRS. JOSEPH RIFE, SR.

As the population increased and membership in the church grew, the homes would not hold the worshippers, and accordingly a house of worship was erected on the Boiling Springs camp meeting ground in 1857. That building had the distinction of being the first house of worship erected by a church of that denomination in the state of Illinois. The building was destroyed by fire in October, 1887, but a new structure was erected, and was dedicated Dec. 25, 1888.

JOSEPH RIFE HOME

One of the early preachers was Rev. Robert Henson, formerly a member of the Baptist church, who settled in Hickory Point township in 1832 Another early settler of the community, who was both a farmer and preacher, was D. S. Weigel. He was one of the original members and also was a pastor of the Fairview church, organized in February, 1871. Its chapel was located in the southwest corner of Section 9, and the organization continued there for many years.

Other denominations were represented among the settlers. There were Methodists, Baptists, Presbyterians, Christians and a few Millerites. The Methodists held services in the school house in Forsyth until 1868, when the church building in the village was erected. The first pastor in charge was Rev. A. Semple.

The first person to teach school in the township was Walter Robbins. School sessions first were held in homes. The first school house was built in Section 34 on the hill south of Stevens creek, just west of the Bloomington road, on land belonging to William F. Montgomery. It was a log structure, put up in 1841. It was used until about 1853, when a school site was selected three-quarters of a mile farther north. This school was named Bull Point, but later was changed to Mound. Another early school house stood a short distance west of Boiling Springs and was first called Possum Fork, later changed to Boiling Springs when the site was changed to a point nearer the Boiling Springs church. In the early '50s a schoolhouse was built in the southwest quarter of Section 15. It was named Dutch Point. Many years later it was moved north, and became the Model school in Section 10. The township now has ten school districts.

The earliest school trustee record available is for 1858, and shows Robert Johnson, Peter Betzer and George W. Schroll, trustees, and Jacob Minch, clerk. At that time there were three school districts.

The first work on the Illinois Central railroad in the township was begun in February, 1853. Rail laying was finished Oct. 11, 1854, and the first train came through from the north. Hezekiah Hays and his brother, Vent, who were husking corn in a field near the track, were busy men indeed, trying to get a look at the train and holding their frightened horses at the same time.

The railroad put down a sidetrack and built a section house in Section 14, naming the stop later as Forsyth, after Robert Forsyth, owner of the land and general freight agent for the road. The village of Forsyth was laid out in 1864 by Edward O. Smith. First houses were erected by N. J. Fitch, George Shaffer, Dr. Baxter, Gordon Songer and James Fenner. N. J. Fitch became postmaster, dealt in grain and also had a grocery store. George Shaffer also was a grocer. Dr. Baxter practiced medicine. Charles Ruehl was the first railroad agent and was a grain buyer, also. He built the first elevator. His son, Ernest, was the first telegraph operator in the depot.

The first school house in the village was erected in 1864. It still stands, though no longer used for a school. Rufus Crossman was the first teacher.

Dr. Hibbs, Dr. J. C. Hall, Dr. G. W. Drury, Dr. J. Frank Allen, Dr. J. L. Kenton, Dr. Donovan and Dr. L. N. Lindsey have served the community as physicians. Another early doctor was Dr. A. McBride, who moved to Oreana in the '80s.

Early storekeepers were the Erwin Bros., Joseph Rue, E. Petch, Samuel Gher, A. G. Benton, V. W. Benton, McMillan & Mason, J. C. Hall, Segrist & Bartlett, Joseph Cooper, Melhorn & Koehler, and E. B. Collins.

The railroad company also put in a switch and erected a station at Bearsdale. About 1890 an elevator was erected by Samuel Troutman. In later years after a new elevator had been built by William Ritchie on the west side of the track, this first elevator was used for storage purposes. An active present day organization of Bearsdale is the Anti-Horse Thief association, which a few years ago provided a building of its own, which is used for various community events

In the period between 1870 and 1880 three other railroads were surveyed through the township. The I. B. & W., now Champaign branch of the Illinois Central, diagonally crosses Section 36; the P. D. & E., now Peoria division of the Illinois Central, crosses Sections 19, 29, 32 and 33. The other road was the Illinois Midland, now the Pennsylvania line. It planned to parallel the main track of the Illinois Central, and work was begun in the Stevens creek bottom, but the panic of 1872-73 halted the work and it never was resumed. Trains were routed over the tracks of the Illinois Central through the township.

The first public road was the stage line and mail route from Decatur to Bloomington. The township enjoyed the distinction of having a station on the horse and cattle thieves road from the Illinois river to the Ohio river. These stations were located about a night's ride apart, the local station, according to tradition, being in Section 14. Another station was four or five miles west of Maroa, and the next in the Salt creek timber west of Clinton.

Near the junction of the Stevens creek branches Sole & Bartlett operated a saw mill and also a grist mill.

J. Y. Braden was the first supervisor from Hickory Point township. Other early supervisors were William F. Montgomery, H. S. Manon, Henry Lehman, A. McBride, Volney Barber and J. R. Hays. The first road commissioner was A. T. Mettlin.

Robert Johnson was the first justice of the peace after the township was organized.

Some of the homes erected in early days which are still standing are the James D. Tait, John Good, William F. Montgomery, Jacob Schroll, Joseph Rife, sr., and John Hanks residences. The Tait home stood on land entered from the government by Mrs. Tait's father, Joseph Spangler.

ILLINI

OWING to the swampy land and lack of timber, Illini township did not attract settlers as early as other townships. The first land entry was made July 18, 1849, by Walter Turner, who entered 80 acres in Section 33, and two 80 acre tracts in Section 34. The following year Mr. Turner established his home and began farming. William Peed of Morgan county and Humphrey Scroggin of Logan county came soon afterwards. Other early settlers were David Skillman Allen, James Henry Pickrell, Peter Wise, H. M. Taggart, John Lehn, John S. Childs, the Ritchie family, Jacob and Eber Major, and John J. Batchelder.

The first child born in the township was Carter, son of Humphrey Scroggin, who was born in 1851. The first death was that of Sarah Eyman, in 1853. The first marriage was that of John Peed and Jemima Henson.

Mr. Pickrell, breeder of fine stock, brought the first Berkshire hogs to the township in 1857. He became the township's first supervisor, and was prominent for years in the affairs of Illini and Harristown townships.

Mr. Pickrell was president for years of the American Shorthorn Breeders' Association. In 1885 he became secretary and treasurer and assumed general charge of its business. He moved that year to Chicago.

David S. Allen brought the first Shorthorn cattle and Cotswald sheep from Kentucky, in 1855.

John J. Batchelder first bought land in Harristown township, Section 10, but sold that land in the early '60s to Mr. Pickrell, and bought other land farther north, in Illini township. He located his home in Section 21, though he had purchased land in other sections, also.

J. J. BATCHELDER

Mr. Batchelder had come from Pittsfield, N. H., and through his influence others from that place came to Illini. Among them were James T. Winslow, Joseph C. Tucker, Samuel E. Batchelder, J. T. Clough, M. E. Batchelder and David Batchelder. These families were the nucleus of what became known as the Yankee settlement or "Illini" neighborhood. Others soon joined them. Stephen Brown, Bradbury Clark, George S. Roberts and son, Edwin J., Dearborn Bunker, Josiah Gilman and son, George, L. R. Morse, Thomas Eaton, David Hall and Emery Janvrin were among them.

After the Pekin, Lincoln & Decatur railroad, now the Peoria branch of the Illinois Central, was built through the township, the town of Warrensburg was located in the northwest quarter of Section 14. The town was platted by Warren & Durfee, and named for John K. Warren. Mr. Warren and Z. Boughn owned the land on which the town was located.

The first house in the new town was built by John Ritchie. Max R. Schroeder had the first harness and shoemaking shop, and the first freight train which passed over the new railroad brought freight to Mr. Schroeder. He also was the first postmaster, named in 1871. Years afterwards that position was held by his son, Fred Schroeder.

Samuel Ritchie had the first mercantile store, and Z. Boughn erected the first grain elevator. The first tile works were built by Boughn & Kepler. The first hotel was kept by Jonas Hawood. Husman Brothers built a mill for grinding grain. Later it was operated by Tucker & Dunlap. This mill came to an end in a windstorm. Workman & Binkley conducted the first wagon shop. Dr. Holbrook was the first physician in the town, and opened a drug store. The first church and the first school were built in 1874.

An important industry of Warrensburg of recent years is the canning factory, where sweet corn is canned. During the canning season a big force of workers is employed.

In 1885 Samuel Ritchie and his wife started a newspaper, the Warrensburg Times. They continued publication until their deaths in recent years. Since then the paper has been published by A. R. Finkenbinder.

Warrensburg was incorporated as a village July 8, 1880, but charter was not obtained until Nov. 10, 1901.

The first school in the township was started in 1857. Sessions were held in homes, and Miss Emma Dudley was the teacher. In 1859 a building was erected in Section 34. In 1874 a school edifice was erected in Warrensburg. It was remodeled in 1890. In 1917 a new brick building was put up, and in 1921 a new Community high school was erected.

The Concordia club, organized in 1899, is one of Warrensburg's active organizations. The town also has several flourishing lodges.

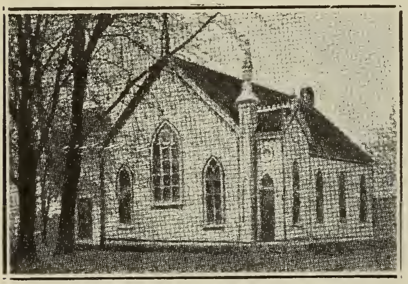
Methodists of the vicinity, who had been holding services first in the Mt. Pleasant school house and later in the Rolling school house, moved in 1873 to Warrensburg and occupied a

WARRENSBURG CANNERY

building known as the "Old Saloon." In 1874 a house of worship was erected. It was enlarged and remodeled in 1905.

The Church of God in Warrensburg was organized April 28, 1875. Services were held in a building owned by Samuel Ritchie. In 1883 a church edifice was erected.

Families in the Yankee settlement were adherents of the Congregational church. For a time religious services had been conducted in that neighborhood by J. A. Hood, a Presbyterian minister. Sentiment for a Congregational church increased, however, and on Feb. 13, 1868, a church was organized in the Batchelder school house, with twenty charter members. Only one of them, Mrs. Mary Hall Thatcher, is still living, at this writing. The first pastor was Rev. John Jones. At first services were held in the Batchelder and Brick school houses, but in 1874 steps were taken to erect a building. The new church, located on the J. J. Batchelder land, just north of Illini cemetery, was dedicated May 2, 1875. This building served the congregation until 1910, when it was destroyed by fire. It was replaced by a new brick edifice, dedicated Oct. 29, 1911. A parsonage was built in 1884-85 on land donated by Mr. and Mrs. John M. Clary.


FIRST ILLINI CHURCH

The Illini church has been the center of activities of the neighborhood. Holiday and other gatherings have held together the traditions of the families of the New England forefathers. The Fourth of July picnic always has been a big event of the year.

An honored resident of the township who gave up his life in the Civil war was Captain Lewis J. Eyman, the first of the Eyman family to come to Macon county.

Captain Eyman, who came here from St. Clair county, was a veteran of two wars, having fought also in the War with Mexico. On coming to Macon county in 1856, he made a claim of 160 acres of land with the land warrant he had received for his services in the Mexican war. For a number of years he cultivated this land. During the Civil war he raised a company of volunteers, which became Company E, One Hundred Sixteenth Illinois Infantry. He was chosen captain of the company, but was killed in one of the first battles in which it participated, the battle at Arkansas Post, Jan. 11, 1863. Women of the community made a flag for Company E when it went to war. It was preserved afterwards by the family of Captain R. M. Hamilton, to whom it was entrusted.

LONG CREEK

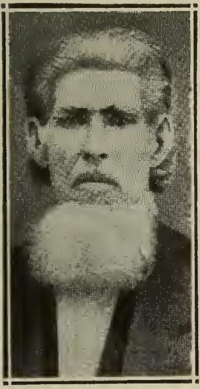
TWO men who had married two sisters were the first to select land in Long Creek township for their future homes. They were William D. Baker and David Davis, natives of North Carolina, and later residents of Rutherford county, Tenn. They came to Macon county in the fall of 1828 and spent that winter in the Ward settlement. In the spring of 1829 they established their homes in Section 20, in Long Creek township.

That was the year Decatur was laid out, and when the commissioners, who had been named to locate the town, visited the Baker-Davis neighborhood, these two early settlers were very much worried. They had not yet entered the land on which they had made their improvements, and they feared they would lose them if a site there was selected for the town.

David Davis was one of the judges of the first election held in Macon county, and William D. Baker was a member of the first grand jury. Davis served afterwards as county treasurer and as county commissioner.

Jacob Myers was the first man to enter any land in the township. On Sept. 26, 1828, he entered 80 acres in Section 36. David Davis entered 80 acres in Section 20 on Oct. 20, 1829.

Within a year or two after the first homes were established in the township, settlers began to come in rapidly. John Florey located in Section 26 in 1830. Newton N. Baker settled in Section 29 the same year. John Rucker, who arrived in 1830, located in Section 15. Mr. Rucker served as county commissioner for a period of fourteen years, and his wise counsel had a large influence in directing the affairs of the county.



WILLIAM D. BAKER

DAVID DAVIS

Other early settlers were Allen Travis, Andrew Haddick, James Wheeler and Joe Davis.

The first marriage in Long Creek township was that of Bailey Myers and Jane Black. The first child born was William M. Davis, son of Mr. and Mrs. David Davis. He was born Jan. 14, 1831.

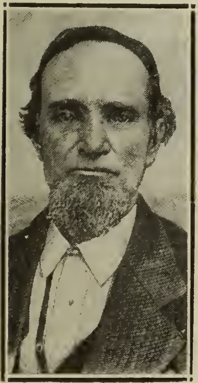
The first mill was built by Joseph McGuinas. John Bell started the first blacksmith shop in 1830 in Section 28. Joseph Davis was the first justice of the peace. Dr. Cooper was the first physician but was not a resident.

Peter Casner, native of Pennsylvania, came in 1845 from Mercer county, Ill. He entered land in Section 31 and established his home in the southwest quarter. There a postoffice was established.

The village of Casner was named for Lewis B. Casner, son of Peter Casner. The elder Mr. Casner gave 80 acres of land to each of his five children when they came of age. Lewis B. Casner remained on the farm until 1891 when he moved to Decatur, where for some years he was interested in the banking business and other activities.

Traces can still be found of the old Decatur-Paris road, which was the earliest in the township. It followed the general direction of the present day Route 121. On this old road were located several taverns. One was at the Joseph Davis home, which was a stage stand and also for a time a postoffice

In 1852 a postoffice was established in the home of Allen Travis, and was called Hopewell. About a mile east of Hopewell was the John Stickel, sr., tavern. That house is still standing. It is a place of historic interest, for in that home Abraham Lincoln stopped occasionally when he was traveling the eighth judicial circuit.



LEWIS B. CASNER

Another tavern was the Jacob Myers home, a mile east of the Stickel house. It is believed that Stephen A. Douglas was a guest at this tavern, for he made speeches in that community.

One of the successful farmers of Long Creek township was Michael Eichinger, who came in 1858. He acquired considerable land and became prominent in the community.

The first school house in the township was built in 1834 in Section 16. Daniel Stickel was the first teacher. It was called the Ehrhart school in honor of Henry Ehrhart. Another early school was the Black school on the John Jones farm.

The first supervisor from Long Creek township was John Rucker.

The first church organized was the Long Creek Methodist church, which had its start in the early '30s, and erected its first building in 1848. The first regular pastor, D. Coulson, was appointed in 1838. The first building was burned to the ground during the Civil war, and it was believed the fire was incendiary.

In 1855 the North Fork Cumberland Presbyterian church was organized at the Emerson school house, with fifty-four charter members. Many of them had been members of the Mt. Zion church. Rev. John C. Smith organized the church and Rev. Daniel Traughber was the first pastor.

Charles Emerson, lawyer, whose home was in Long Creek township, gave the land for the North Fork church.

The Antioch Christian church was organized in October, 1859. The last charter member of this organization, Mrs. Sue Tyler Odor, died only recently (1930). In 1864 a church building was erected on land given by her father, Rev. J. W. Tyler, who was instrumental in organizing the church and was its first pastor.

The Old Order Brethren church in Long Creek township was organized in the '80s. Its church building, erected in 1898, is about four miles southwest of Cerro Gordo. This organization, though small in numbers, in 1901 entertained the national assembly of the church.

Long Creek township has two railroad stops. Long Creek is in Section 27. A postoffice was established there in 1875, called Long Creek, and a store was started the same year by Kizer & Myers. Benson Myers was the first postmaster. The town was laid out in 1882.

The village of Casner was started in 1877 by Lewis B. Casner and Rev. J. H. Crowder. Mr. Casner built the first house, and he was the first postmaster. J. H. Lord was the first blacksmith, and Dr. M. V. Lonergan the first physician. The United Brethren church erected a building in 1876. The village was platted in 1882.

Antioch was a flag stop on the railroad for years, but afterwards was discontinued.

One of the early residents of Long Creek township, who in later years was called upon often to tell of the early days of the county, was Rev. Nathan M. Baker, who was born in 1837 in Long Creek township and spent nearly his entire life there. Rev. Mr. Baker was a son of William D. Baker. Land entered by the elder Mr. Baker from the government passed into the hands of Rev. N. M. Baker, and today is in possession of his children.

Rev. Mr. Baker was a minister for more than fifty years. He entered the ministry in 1858, joining the Springfield presbytery. In 1862 he enlisted as a private in Company C, One Hundred Sixteenth Regiment, and was made chaplain of the regiment. His service in the army was not confined to ministering as a chaplain, however, as he frequently was found in the front ranks in the fighting.

After the war he spent many years in pastoral work, serving different country charges. In 1895 he moved to Lincoln to educate his children at Lincoln university, and while there he taught astronomy in the university. He was deeply interested in that subject, and built his own telescope. Rev. Mr. Baker at one time, for the benefit of his grandchildren, wrote a book in which he told interesting experiences of the pioneer times. He often gave addresses before public gatherings and wrote papers for historical societies, and his contributions to the historical data of the county were extremely valuable. In 1899 Mr. Baker moved to Decatur, where he lived a retired life until his death in 1922.

MAROA

MAROA township had its first settler in 1839, but it was not until in the '50s that settlers began to arrive in numbers. James Pettyjohn was the first to come. He arrived from Kentucky in 1839 and located in Section 5. The first land entered in the township was a tract of 30 acres in Section 7, entered by Alfred Downen Sept. 6, 1836. Thomas M. Geddis was the next to enter land, selecting tracts in Section 6.

Among the early settlers were Garrett J. Schenck and Joseph Hilt of Ohio, Joseph S. Clough of Morgan county, the three Gray brothers, Robert, John and George; Milton P. Funk, John M. Foulkes, Edward Foulkes, John S. Parker, William Cooper, Dr. J. W. Thayer, Samuel and William Potter, M. Friedman and William F. Crawford, most of whom came in the '50s. Andrew J. Thrift came in 1864. John Longstreet came in 1862. George B. Short and Frederick W. Miller arrived in 1863. W. J. Compton came in 1866. Bazel Cooper, son of William Cooper, lived to see the day when he was the only person left in the township who had been there in 1855. Bazel Cooper drove one of the teams on the family journey to Macon county from Indiana.

JOHN CROCKER

After the Illinois Central railroad was built through the township, the town of Maroa was laid out by the Associated Land company, and the railroad company platted an addition known as the Railroad addition to Maroa. In 1854 a passenger depot was erected and John Crocker became the first agent, continuing in the position until 1866. Maroa was incorporated as a village March 7, 1867, Job A. Rice being the first president of the board of trustees. On April 8, 1889, Maroa was incorporated as a city.

John Crocker, native of New Hampshire, came to Maroa from Jacksonville. He was not only first station agent, but was first postmaster, first banker and first lumber and grain merchant. He also was one of the founders of the Presbyterian church. Mr. Crocker died in 1879. His son and grandson have followed him in Maroa business circles.

Garrett J. Schenck in 1855 erected the first house in Maroa. It was used also as a store, and then was enlarged and became the Schenck House, which for many years was a popular hotel. The house stood on the site now occupied by the Presbyterian church.

M. Friedman built a house and store in 1857. He was in business there many years, and was succeeded by his son-in-law, William Moser.

William F. Crawford erected the first house on what was afterwards known as the Bloomington road.

The Prairie Hotel was erected in 1858 by William Greer.

The first grain elevator was built about 1860 by Mr. Ives, and later sold to John Walker. In 1865 a steam flour mill was built by Tylee and George E. Conover. Later an addition, used as an elevator, was erected. The flour mill afterwards was discontinued.

The first justice of the peace in the township was Milton Funk, named in 1855. Other early justices were John Crocker, 'Squire Ross, Joseph Jones, John B. Carey, C. C. Crandall and Henry E. Kent. Dr. Smith was the first physician, coming in 1850. Other early physicians were Dr. J. W. Thayer, Dr. Josiah Brown, Dr. L. Tozer Dr. C. A. McLean and Dr. J. H. Axton. Dr. McLean's son, Dr. W. T. McLean, followed him in the profession, and has continued his practice for about fifty years.

SCHENCK HOUSE

The first birth in Maroa township was that of Charlotte Pettyjohn, who was born Feb. 10, 1852. The first death was that of John H. Pettyjohn, Aug. 15, 1852. The first marriage was that of Joseph Garrett and Mary A. Pettyjohn, who were married in 1856 by Rev. George Clifton.

Two fraternal orders organized lodges in Maroa in 1865. The lodges were Maroa lodge, 454, A. F. and A. M., and Maroa lodge 314, I. O. O. F. Other fraternal organizations came in later years.

The first bank in Maroa was established in 1867 by John Crocker. It is still in business, now known as the Crocker & Co. bank.

The first newspaper in Maroa was The Times, started in 1867 by John Sharp. The Tablet and The Tribune also made their appearance in early days. Then came The News, started by Henry B. Funk. The Budget was founded in 1876. It later became The Messenger. Another paper called The Times was founded in 1886 by T. C. Grady. The two papers which survived, The Times and The News, were consolidated in 1903.

Thomas Shaw taught the first school in the township in 1852. The first building erected for school purposes was put up in 1856 on "The Ridge", two and a quarter miles west of Maroa. Alvin Woodward was the first teacher there. Several years later a building was erected in Maroa, and the first teacher there was Robert Collins. In 1866 a brick schoolhouse was constructed, and later a high school building was erected. This high school was torn down in 1915, when the present day structure was erected.

On Jan. 30, 1859, Presbyterians met in the railroad station and organized a church. Services were held at the station for several months. In 1868 a frame house of worship was erected on the site now occupied by the Christian church. This building was sold in 1911, when the present brick church building was erected.

Members of the Christian church began holding services in 1862 in Dr. Thayer's home. Rev. J. W. Tyler was the first preacher. A church was organized May 4, 1862. Services were held in the public school house for some years. In 1869 a building was erected. It was used until the present day church house was put up in 1911.

A Methodist Episcopal church was organized at Belle Prairie in 1857, and moved to Maroa in 1860. A house of worship was erected in 1867 on the site of the present parsonage. In 1892 the congregation built a new church which was used until it was destroyed by fire in 1912. Then the present church house was constructed.

MAJOR C. F. EMERY

The Center Ridge Christian church in Section 32 is one of the oldest of the country churches. It was organized in 1867 by L. A. Engle and J. B. Millison.

There have been several other rural churches, where services afterwards were discontinued. One old church building, not now in use, still stands in the Ridge cemetery.

William F. Crawford was the first supervisor from Maroa township, holding that position for five years.

One pioneer settler, active for many years, was Major Charles F. Emery. He served in the Civil war, and later engaged in the real estate and loan business. In 1872 he founded the C. F. Emery & Co. bank. He also started a bank and was in the loan business in South Dakota, but failure of crops and other reverses brought loss, and his bank was taken over by Crocker & Co. Major Emery never recovered from his losses, and the latter part of his life he spent as a rural mail carrier, being the first carrier on Route 2 out of Maroa. He died in 1911.

From 1880 to 1888 Major Emery served as a member of the state board of equalization.

Maroa township has had many progressive citizens. Among the early families have been the Stoutenboroughs, Bennetts, Wendlings, Bairds, Rays, Marshs, McCanns and many others who have contributed to the progress of the township. Three citizens, Jason Rogers, John H. Crocker and Thomas N. Leavitt, have been honored by election to the state legislature. Maroa has grown to be the largest town in Macon county, outside of Decatur. Its population in 1930 was 1,154.

MILAM

MILAM township was the last township formed in Macon county, having been detached from Mt. Zion township in September, 1869. It had very few settlers until after the Civil war. The first land entries were made by Benjamin Durgin, who entered 160.24 acres in the NE¼, Section 1; Sarah Nash, who entered 164.18 acres in the same section; and Andrew Libby, who entered 160 acres in the same section. These entries were all made Aug. 23, 1852.

Before this, however, James Greenfield and son, Jesse, had located in the north part of the township, where they erected a house. They came early in the year 1851.

Joel Cloud settled in Section 12 in 1857, and David J. Freeland located in the same section in 1858. A man named Hale also was an early comer.

Practically all the other early settlers came after the Civil war Among them were J. B. Gleason, David Shelton, James Kerr, William Rutledge, Richard Cribbett, William Meyers, John W. Dudley, Archibald Dickson, Frederick Wehrman, Henry Wehrman, John C. McReynolds, William Dudley, J. W. Smith. One by one others came, until the township was well populated.

J. B. GLEASON

J. B. Gleason, the man who gave the township its name, was the first justice of the peace, and the first supervisor from the township. Mr. Gleason, who was a native of Connecticut, had lived in Iowa before coming to Macon county, and had served in various public offices in that state.

George A. Bartlett was the first collector, W. E. Kyer the first assessor, and James M. Kerr the first town clerk. Mr. Bartlett also served as a supervisor, and as commissioner of highways. Mr. Kyer was another who served as supervisor.

The first school district was laid off in 1866, and the name of Harmony was given to the first school started. The winter term of that school was taught by Samuel Gregory.

The first child born in the township was Franklin Cloud, son of Joseph and Nancy Cloud, and the first death was that of Philo Hale.

Milam is one of two townships in Macon county that have no railroads, and no villages or towns. It also has the distinction of being the smallest township in the county. It has been the home, however, of many prosperous farmers and its representatives on the board of supervisors have filled their places most acceptably and have done their part in handling the affiairs of the county.

MT. ZION

MUCH of historic interest lies within the boundaries of Mt. Zion township. Some of the earliest settlers in the county located in that township. As the seat of Mt. Zion academy, the village became widely known. In a day when institutions of learning were extremely scarce, the academy was the chief educational center of this section of Illinois.

The school was established by a stock company, and a two story frame building, accommodating 100 students, was erected in 1856. John Kaufman was the contractor. School opened that fall, with Rev. Prestly H. Crider as principal and W. P. Baker as assistant. The school was known then as the Mt. Zion Male and Female academy. The first trustees were Rev. Daniel Traughber, George A. Smith, Charles Emerson, J. D. Campbell and John Smith. One of the men instrumental in founding the school was W. C. Mayers. The first building was destroyed by fire April 12, 1857, and it was replaced by a two story brick structure. The brick used was made from clay taken directly from the school grounds. Mr. McBey was contractor.

G. W. Kinsolving was the second principal, and he was succeeded by A. J. McGlumphey. Under the latter's direction the academy enjoyed its greatest prosperity. McGlumphey later became president of Lincoln college at Lincoln, Ill.

Other principals who succeeded McGlumphey were William Mariner, Dr. A. J. Wallace, and Professor Hughes. W. C. Outten was assistant to Dr. Wallace. Principal Mariner's assistant was Miss Lucy Holingsworth, later Mrs. William E. Nelson.

MT. ZION ACADEMY

When the Cumberland Presbyterian church decided to establish a college at Lincoln, Ill., it was feared that such a move would sound the death knell of Mt. Zion academy. Hence, it was proposed to put the institution under the wing of the church. It was re-chartered in 1865 and attached to the Decatur presbytery. Professor McGlumphey went to Lincoln College, when it was opened in 1866, and a good many of his pupils went with him. From that time the Mt. Zion school began to decline, but it remained open until 1871. With the establishment of public schools, including high schools, the need for the academy no longer existed.

After the building went out of use as an academy, it was rented by school directors and used as a public school. Later the building was bought by the school directors. It was in use until 1904 when it was torn down, and a new school building erected on the site. In 1926 Mt. Zion's new high school building was opened.

Many of the men and women who once were students at Mt. Zion academy became leaders in their chosen lines of work in later years, both in Macon county and in other places. In after years they loved to recall the good old days when the school flourished. A delightful event in their lives was the reunion of academy students which was held Aug. 14, 1913, at Mt. Zion, when nearly 100 of the former students met to live over again their school days. Six states were represented on that occasion. A quartet sang the same songs that had been sung at a reunion in 1867. That quartet included three of the members of the original quartet, S. S. Hopkins, J. B. Martin, and Mrs. Lida Hopkins Wells, and the fourth member, Mrs. Mollie Kaufman Champion, was the sister of the fourth member of the original quartet, Love Kaufman

There were many stories that day of the pranks of the students, of the barracks where many of the boys "batched", the McMullen boarding house, and reminiscences of the teachers.

In Mt. Zion was erected the first church building in Macon county. It was a log structure put up by the Cumberland Presbyterian church, which was organized in 1830. The present church building stands on the site of that first one.

The first land entered from the government in Mt. Zion township was by Henry Traughber, who, on June 4, 1829, entered the east half of the N. E. ¼ of Section 8. That farm is still in the family, now owned and occupied by Judd Traughber, grandson of Henry Traughber. It still contains the log house and log barn built ninety years ago by Henry Traughber. The barn was enclosed with a cattle barn in 1899. This barn has the distinction of being the oldest threshing outfit in the county, for in the early days the wheat, stored in this barn, was threshed out by the tramping of horses over it.

ORIGINAL TRAUGHBER HOUSE

Others who entered land in this township in early days were Elisha Moore, Robert (Uncle Robin) Wilson, and William Lacy.

James Finley was regarded as the first settler, for he located in 1827 on Section 10. Finley came from Kentucky. Benjamin Wilson came in 1827. He was one of the first county commissioners.

Rev. David Foster came here to preach in 1828. The same year came William Wheeler, Sr. His son, William Wheeler, Jr., was prominently connected with the history of the county as sheriff, assessor and collector.

Rev. David Foster returned in 1829 to locate. In his home the organization of the Cumberland Presbyterian church took place in 1830.

John Smith of Tennessee came in 1829 and settled in Section 9. The same year came Harvey, Finis and Thomas Travis, Edmund Turpin, James D. Campbell, Andrew and John Davidson, and Alexander W. Bell. James D. Campbell was a member of the county commissioners' court and for many years was a justice of the peace. He died in 1864.

Henry Hodge arrived in 1830. William and Madison Turpin came in 1831 and settled on Big Creek.

The first persons married in the township were John C. Foster and Emily Montgomery in 1831. The first child born was Robert S. Traughber, born Sept. 2, 1830. The first death was that of Thomas Nelms in 1830.

The first school house was built in Section 4 in 1832, James Scott being the first teacher.

Some of the early ministers were Rev. David Foster, Rev. Neill Johnson, Rev. Daniel Traughber, of the Cumberland Presbyterian church; and Rev. J. M. Peck of the Baptist church, noted in the early history of the state and known as author of books and pamphlets on early Illinois history.

The first mill in the township was built by Robert Law in 1835 at Whitehouse's in Section 6. It was a band mill, run by horse power.

Among the early justices of the peace were J. D. Campbell, Alonzo Pierce, and Mr. Schuffield. First physicians were Dr. Buckworth and Dr. Blalock. The first supervisor was W. C. Myers.

The village of Mt. Zion was laid out in 1860 by S. K. Smith. It was incorporated as a village April 13, 1882. The first house was erected by Andrew Wilson, and the first store was run by Skillman and Mays. Dr. Blalock erected the first hotel, and it was conducted by John McMullen. As early as 1851 G. W. Riber had a blacksmith shop.

Mt. Zion postoffice was first called Wilson postoffice, after Andrew Wilson. When the village was laid out, it was named after the church there, Mt. Zion.

The Methodist church was called at first the Sulphur Springs society. It became an appointment in 1857, the membership previously having been at Mt. Gilead. In 1865 a church was erected. The Sulphur Springs church moved to Mt. Zion in 1874.

One of the well known residents of Mt. Zion township, Washington S. Smith, grain dealer and supervisor, was member for two terms (1890-1894) of the general assembly.

Another village in Mt. Zion township is Hervey City, at the junction of the Illinois Central and Pennsylvania lines. It was named after Robert G Hervey.

Along the banks of Big Creek in Mt. Zion township lay the quaint and picturesque settlement known as Whistleville. Settled years ago by Kentucky timber men, who built rude cabins, it maintained all its old time primitiveness while the outside world forged ahead to better things. The settlers there had taken small tracts of land, where a few chickens, hogs, and cow or two, and perhaps a day's work occasionally, supplied their needs. They mingled little with the outside. Only in recent years have changes come to the place. Slowly the little tracts of land are being absorbed by the larger farms nearby. Much of the timber has been cleared. No doubt the time will come when there will be nothing left of the original cluster of cabin homes and Whistleville will be no different from other farm land.

Woodbine park, formerly owned by Eli Ulery, but now the state Y. M. C. A. camp, and called Camp Seymour, also is in Mt. Zion township. For about six years chautauquas were held at this park annually, and hundreds of campers lived on the grounds. In 1922 the park, consisting of 55 acres, was sold to settle the Eli Ulery estate. It was bought for $15,025 by H. M. Seymour of Payson, Ill., and presented to the state Y. M. C. A. for an older boys' camp, as a memorial to Mr. and Mrs. Seymour's son, Charles W. Seymour.

NIANTIC

THE first settler in Niantic township was Joseph Strickland, who came in 1825, from either Ohio or Kentucky, and settled in Section 23. He erected his log cabin near what is now Long Point cemetery. Strickland became known as "Devil Joe" because of his rough nature and lack of cleanliness. He had a large family .

The next to come was William Turner, who arrived in 1826 and located in Section 15. Other early settlers were Joseph Blankenship, George W. Gepford, J. S. Kizer, George Hawk, A. C. Edgar, Thomas Acom, James Hogan, James Dingman, Nathan W. Brock, Jesse Lockhart, Thomas A. Pritchett, Seth Brock, the Farnam family, Dr. H. N. Clark, Dr. E. S. Faris and George Wree.

James Dingman, who settled about two miles south of the present town of Niantic, in 1843, was active for many years in the township, and became a sort of patriarch in the community. When people wanted advice they went to "Uncle Jimmy" Dingman. Mr. Dingman was a man of strong religious tendencies, and was one of the founders of the Long Point church, in what is known as Dingman's grove The church building, erected in 1856, is still in use. An interesting feature concerning this church is that no musical instruments are allowed. Above the entrance to the building is this inscription:

This house was built
by the Church of Christ
A. D. 1856
in which no instrumental
music shall be used to
worship God.

The Long Point church was organized in 1850 and for four years held services in Mr. Dingman's log cabin home. Nathan G. Averitt was instrumental in organizing the church. From this congregation have developed the Christian churches of Illiopolis, Harristown, Niantic and Berea.

LONG POINT CHURCH

James Dingman was one of the three men who divided Macon county into townships. He accumulated much land, owning as much as 1300 acres. He was a leader in the community for many years.

Long Point was known from the very earliest days of the county. In laying out roads and in giving directions, Long Point often was mentioned in early records.

Thomas Acom was another of the prominent men of the early days. He came to Macon county in 1850, and became an extensive land holder. For twenty years he served as a school director, and he also held the offices of school trustee, supervisor and road commissioner. He became an extensive land holder. Mr. Acom always was interested in the betterment of the community.

THOMAS ACOM

JESSE LOCKHART

He was strongly opposed to the liquor business, and one time, to rid the community of a saloon, he bought the saloon with all its contents, and emptied out the liquor to the last drop.

Wyatt Strickland, son of Joseph Strickland, was the first man to enter land in Niantic township, entering 80 acres in Section 23 on Nov. 30, 1829.

The first child born in the township was a child of Wyatt Strickland, and the first death was that of another child of the same man.

After the Great Western railroad was built through Niantic township, Thomas Lewis, George B. Richardson and Calvin J. Lockhart laid out the town of Prairie City, after purchasing twenty-one acres of land from Jesse Lockhart as a site. That was in 1853. The railroad station was given the name of Long Point. When the postoffice was established, Calvin Lockhart became postmaster, and the postoffice was called Lockhart. The three names caused so much confusion, that it was decided to select one name by vote of the people. The citizens chose the name, Niantic, which was the name of a tribe of Indians in Connecticut, that name being suggested by a former resident of that state.

The first house in Niantic was not built there, but was moved in from the timber near Long Point cemetery. William Sponsler had partially built the house, but disposed of it for $12.50 (the amount it had cost him) to Jesse Lockhart, who moved it to the new town site. From this beginning Niantic grew to be a good sized village. Its present population is 591. It was incorporated as a village Aug. 23, 1894.

The first store in Niantic was conducted by William Gansen. This store was located on the site of the residence of Mrs. Margaret Griffin. George Wree, an enterprising German who had come from his native country a few years before, wanted that site for a store, and within five minutes he had closed a deal for it. For over sixty years Mr. Wree lived in Niantic township. He kept a store in town for a time, then moved to a farm, but later returned to town. He served as postmaster and school treasurer, and was founder of the Bank of Niantic.

The first physician in Niantic was Dr. Stewart. He came in 1856. The following year Dr. E. S. Faris came, and in 1859 Dr. H. N. Clark arrived. Dr. J. H. Hughes, both physician and preacher, came the same year. The latter was named as the first supervisor from Niantic township. Dr. Faris's son, John P. Faris, was identified with the business life of Niantic for many years. He was killed in an automobile accident in 1910.

Niantic's coal mine was sunk in 1882 by Hugh Mooney. It was the town's leading industry for many years.

Joab Wilkinson was Niantic's first justice of the peace.

The first school house in the township was built in 1847 in the timber near the Strickland home. School sessions had been held before that in the home of James Dingman, with James Harper as teacher. The second school house erected to replace the first, is still standing, about 200 feet from the original site, but is now used as a residence. The school was called the Dingman school. The present Dingman school is located a mile east of the first building.

In the town of Niantic the first school was taught by Miss Elizabeth Ryan. Sessions were held in a ware room of the railroad company. In the fall of 1858 a storm was seen approaching. Dr. Hughes went to the school room and advised the teacher to send the children home. She did so. When the storm struck, the school building was demolished. School was held in various places until 1861 when a new school house was erected. That building was turned into a township hall in later years. Another school house was erected in 1875. It was afterwards used as a residence, after a brick school building was put up in 1899. In 1925 a new community high school building was erected in Niantic, at a cost of over $50,000.

The old log school house erected in 1847 was used for the first religious services conducted in the township. Rev. A. D. Northcutt did the preaching. The school building was used until the Long Point church was erected. The Long Point church has been moved three times, but is not far from the original location.

In 1867, after a successful revival conducted by Rev. John Wilson, a new Christian church was formed in Niantic. Construction of a building followed, and it was dedicated in March, 1868. Thomas A. Pritchett was the first elder, and the first deacons were George Wree and Griffin Chamberlain. Rev. B. J. Radford was the first resident pastor. The church building continued in use until the present day house of worship was erected. It was dedicated April 22, 1923.

The Methodist church held services in the town hall until the erection of a church building in 1894. This building was remodeled in 1904, and is still in use.

Catholics of the community first held services in the home of Michael Walsh, and later in the John Henebry home. A new church building was erected in 1892, but it was struck by lightning and burned in 1923. It was replaced with a handsome brick structure, dedicated in 1926.

OAKLEY

FIRST settlers in Oakley township were James Howell and his son, William. James Howell, who was a native of Ohio, located in Section 30 in the spring of 1825. A little later the son, William, came with his family. Other early arrivals in the township were John Rea, Isaac Veech, Guy Helm, William, David and Achilles Morris, Arch Walton and Garland Wheeler. Caleb Hess came in 1850. James Chambers was another early resident. He located in Section 26. Jacob Seitz also settled in the same section, when he came in 1857. John Hizer came to Macon county in 1849, walking all the way from Pennsylvania. The next year he went to work at Spangler's mill. Later he bought land and began farming.

William Howell was the first to enter land. On March 19, 1830, he entered 80 acres in Section 25.

William Howell, D. B. Landis and Andrew Froman were early justices of the peace in the township. The first supervisor was G. W. Forest. Other early supervisors were L. Chambers, H. McCoy, O. J. Doyle, E. Rhodes, R. Spencer, Dr. S. Cooper, William Grason and H. J. Manecke.

First physicians in the township were G. H. Young and J. G. H. Smith.

The first marriage was that of Caleb Warfield and Nancy Rea, in 1835.

The first postoffice was in the home of John Rickett in Section 35, and Mr. Rickett was postmaster.

The first saw mill was erected in 1840 by Rhodes and Wheeler, and the first grist mill was built by Guy Helm in 1844. John Hawkins established the first blacksmith shop.

The first school house was erected in the fall of 1830 in Section 26, and there Alexander Patton taught the first school.

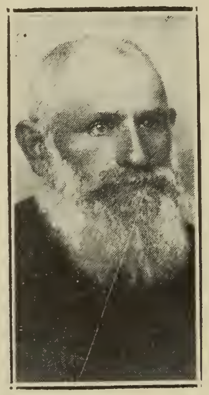
Rev. Alonzo Lapham, Methodist minister, was the first preacher to deliver a sermon in the township. That was in 1835. A Methodist church was organized in 1858 by Rev. J. F. Everly.

Captain William Grason, who came to the township in 1854, bought land in Section 9. He enlisted in the army during the Civil war, and became Captain of Company A, 116th Illinois Regiment. Captain Grason served as supervisor a number of times.

W. F. Coulter in 1874 bought land along the Sangamon, on which a mill was located. That mill, known as Coulter's mill, has stood for many years.

One of the life-long residents of the township was Andrew J Veech, who was born in this county April 13, 1836, the son of Isaac Veech. A. J. Veech became an extensive farmer and stock raiser. His home was in Section 3, but he owned land in other sections and also in Decatur township.

A. J. VEECH



SIMON P. NICKEY

The village of Oakley was laid out in 1856 by William Rea. A postoffice was established, and D. B. Landis became the first postmaster. He was also the first justice of the peace. John Nickey opened the first hotel, and G. M. Everline the first store. Dr. Samuel Cooper was the first physician, and E. Rhodes the first blacksmith. The first house in the village was erected by William Rea.

Simon P. Nickey, who started in the mercantile business in 1858 in Oakley, was appointed station agent for the Great Western railroad in 1859. Mr. Nickey who was a native of Pennsylvania, having been born in Cumberland county, Nov. 16, 1832, came to Macon county in May, 1855. He was at different times assessor, collector, school director, school teacher, postmaster and county superintendent of schools, serving in the latter office from 1873 to 1877.

The first school in the village was built in 1860.

On June 1, 1879, T. O. Holcomb opened a general store, and grain business, which he continued many years. In recent years the business was conducted by his son, Cassius Holcomb, who died in 1929.

Sangamon is another station on the Wabash in Oakley township A general store was opened there in 1857 by William Harmon and Benjamin Wheeler. Silas Chappell was the first postmaster. Mr. Chappell also ran a cooper shop. In 1867 a blacksmith shop was started by J. B. Spangler.

Oakley is in the center of a good grain district, and has always been a place of some importance among grain dealers, as a shipping point. It is connected by hard road with State Route No. 10, and is a station on the Illinois Traction System line.

PLEASANT VIEW

THE first settlements in Pleasant View township were in the northern part of the township. Valentine Claywell was the first to come, arriving in 1828. Other early settlers were John Reed and John G. Fletcher.

The first land entered was by David Simons, who entered 40 acres in Section 13 on March 15, 1836. Samuel Widick entered 160 acres in the same section.

Among the prominent residents of the township who came a little later were William M. Moss, E. F. Delbridge, William F. Brookshire, O. T. Crow, Abel S. Ferre, Eleazer House, George W. Carr and son, Nathan A. Carr. Another long time resident was James D. Smith, who was born in this county. Rev. A. D. Northcutt, early prominent minister, located in the township in 1867.

The first school building was erected in 1862 in Section 7. William Sterrett was teacher. School had been taught, however, according to one report, as early as 1857.

The first mill was a wind mill erected by James Irwin for grinding corn.

William Brookshire opened a blacksmith shop in Section 8 in 1865.

D. D. Rowles was the first supervisor from Pleasant View township. Other early supervisors were John Hatfield and E. House.

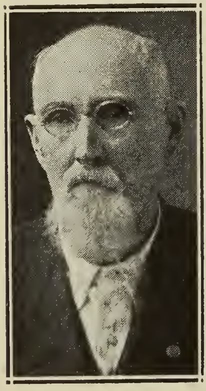
The village of Blue Mound was laid out in 1870, and was incorporated Feb. 17, 1876. The land on which the village was platted was owned by Dr. Goltra. The first house in the village was built by William Cummings, but it was erected in 1861, before there was any village. In 1870 O. Ullrich & Bros. moved a store, which had stood about a mile to the north, down to the new town. The same year the postoffice was established and William Clements became postmaster. In 1871 a school house was erected. Isaac Black was the first teacher. A. H. Eicholtz opened the first hotel in 1870. Albert Nicholls had the first blacksmith shop in town.

A mill and elevator were erected in 1870 by Henry Kain and Edward Eicholtz. In 1878 Scott and Lemen started a tile factory. Willard and Bosworth started a tile factory in 1877.

The Methodist Episcopal church was organized in 1871 and erected a building in 1877. Bethel society, two miles north of Blue Mound, was organized in 1870 by Rev. J. W. Warfield, and erected a church that year.

The Christian church had its start Jan. 4, 1874, being organized by Elder A. D. Northcutt. The church purchased a building that stood a mile and a half south of the village, and moved it to Blue Mound. In 1874 a United Brethren church was organized in Blue Mound by Rev. J. Corley. The following year a house of worship was erected.

E. J. Clements, brother of the first postmaster of Blue Mound, was named postmaster in 1871 and served for fourteen years. Four years later he again was given the office, and held it for four years.



ROBERT WARNICK

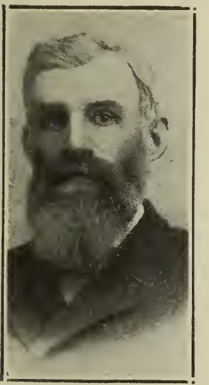
One of Blue Mound's interesting citizens was Robert Warnick, who was a boyhood friend of Abraham Lincoln, though Lincoln was fifteen years older than he. Mr. Warnick was a son of William Warnick, and was a young boy at the home of his father in Blue Mound township at the time Lincoln lived in the county. Robert Warnick was a veteran of both the war with Mexico and the Civil war, and could tell interesting tales of the big conflicts. Robert Warnick was born in 1824, and lived until 1915, spending the latter part of his life in Blue Mound. He was a brother of Ira Warnick, who also lived to a good old age. Ira Warnick, who made his home in Blue Mound township, was a great hunter. He also was a friend of Lincoln and could tell many stories of Lincoln's life in Macon county.

Pleasant View township has been the home of many progressive farmers. The village of Blue Mound has become an interesting point in the county, with good schools, churches and homes, keeping pace with the progress of the day. In 1930 Blue Mound had a population of 817. It is on the Wabash railroad and also on State Route No. 48 hard road.

SOUTH MACON

SO far as known, South Macon township had no settlers before 1835, when William Morris came from Indiana and located just north of what afterwards was known as Long Grove. He died the following year. Isaac Vise came in 1837 or 1838 and located farther south than Mr. Morris. In 1840 came Thomas Atterberry, called "Black Tom", who built a house in Section 8. His family came in 1845. James and Hargus Stewart and Richard Atterberry came up from Kentucky and settled in the township. William Portwood also was an early arrival. Thomas Davis, who had settled in Mt. Zion township in 1848, decided to move over to South Macon. Isaac Davis came in 1853, and James Hobson in 1855.

Robert Bivans, for many years connected with the history of the township, first came in 1859. He served as township collector, clerk, postmaster at Macon, alderman, and was well known as farmer, merchant and insurance agent.



DAVID P. KELLER

ROBERT W. HIGHT

South Macon township was the home of David P. Keller, who was elected a member of the legislature in 1888 and again in 1890. Mr. Keller, who was a native of Ohio, moved to Shelby county in 1864, and to Macon county in 1869. He lived in South Macon township until 1895 when he moved to Moweaqua, where he was engaged in the banking business until his death Dec. 12, 1901.

As an auctioneer for farm sales for a number of years, Mr. Keller made a wide acquaintance. He had once said that he could at one time go between Decatur and Shelbyville over three different roads and tell who lived in every house and who owned every piece of land.

In 1884 Mr. Keller began raising Aberdeen Angus cattle, continuing with that breed as long as he was on the farm. Mr. Keller was one of the founders of the Macon County Mutual Fire Insurance company.

Henry L. Highly came to Macon county in 1861, and for many years was a successful farmer in South Macon township. In 1899 he retired and moved to Macon. He held the positions of school director and road commissioner.

Robert W. Hight was the eldest of the Hight brothers who came to the township in 1855 from Greene county. For many years he devoted his attention to farming interests, but in 1895 he retired and moved to Macon, where he erected one of the finest homes in the town. While on the farm Mr. Hight served as a school director.

One of the extensive land holders of the township was Sard Giles, who made his home in Macon. When he first came he was in the employ of other farmers, but gradually accumulated land of his own until he had hundreds of acres.

The first land in the township was entered by James Stewart, Nov. 5, 1835. He entered 40 acres in Section 13. The same day William Morris entered 80 acres in the same section, then a 40 acre tract and another 80 acres.

The first school house in the township was built in 1854 in Section 12, and the first teacher was Bradford Stuart.

The first supervisor from the township was W. D. Hamilton.

The village of Macon was platted in 1856 by the Illinois Central railroad. It was incorporated as a village April 15, 1868, and as a city April 7, 1879.

The first building erected was put up by the railroad company. C. H. Ruby, the first resident of the town, lived there from 1854 to 1860. J. S. Ruby was appointed railroad agent in 1857. For a number of years the Illinois Central maintained a land office in Macon for the sale of lands belonging to the road.

The first residence was built by A. G. Harris in 1858. The same year a school house was erected. James Wells was the first teacher. The building afterwards became a dwelling house.

Religious services were started in 1860, the depot being used until 1865 when a church was erected by the Methodist congregation. Rev. S. S. Russell was pastor then. Rev. Mr. Wallace was the first preacher who located in the town.

St. Stanislaus Catholic church was started in 1866 by Rev. Anthony Voght. A house of worship was erected in 1868.

The Presbyterian church was organized June 12, 1865, in the school house. Rev. S. W. Mitchell was the first pastor. In 1867 the congregation erected a house of worship. It was wrecked by a storm the following year, and later another building was erected. It was occupied in 1876.

In 1871 the Lutheran church erected a house of worship.

The first blacksmith shop was established in 1857 by Charles Crow.

Dr. George S. Gray was the first physician to locate in Macon. He came in 1860, and practiced his profession there many years.

C. H. Ruby opened a hotel in 1860 and continued it many years.

In 1857 a postoffice was established, J. S. Ruby being the first postmaster.

The first death in the town was that of James Gegretty, who fell from the roof while helping to build the Illinois Central station in 1855 and was fatally injured.

From these beginnings Macon has grown into a good sized town, having now a population of 799. It has good churches, schools, including new community high school; an Eastern Star sanitarium, and fraternal orders. Among the long time business men of the place was Anton Beschle, who before his death in 1927 had the distinction of being the oldest charter member of the Masonic lodge at Macon, the oldest business man and the oldest church member. Among other business men with long careers were John Schudel and W. M. Towson.

State Route No. 2 hard road passes through Macon, giving it connection with points from one end of the state to another.

Another railroad stop in South Macon township is Walker, named for John W. Walker, stock and grain dealer, who, in 1880, persuaded the Illinois Central to put in a switch and side track and build a station in Section 8. An elevator was erected there in 1882.

SOUTH WHEATLAND

THE first settler in South Wheatland township was William Downing, the man who was the first to build a home in Macon county. He sold his cabin in 1824 to John Ward, and moved to Bond county. The Ward brothers, as told in earlier chapters in this volume, settled in the same neighborhood south of Decatur, which became known as the Ward settlement. Besides John Ward, the family included Thomas, Lewis, James, Jeremiah and William.

John Ward ran a ferry across the Sangamon, and kept a store at "Indian Bluff". He died in 1831, and was buried near the spot where he had made his home.

Other early arrivals in the township were Elisha Freeman, Hiram Robinson, Andrew W. Smith, Robert Smith, Joshua G. Perdue, Lambert Bearden, Ephraim Cox, Winkfield Everet, Dr. J. G. Speer, John Connard and William Wheeler.

Robert Smith and William Cox were the first to build homes out on the prairie, away from the timber. Others followed, and soon the prairie was dotted with cabins and other improvements.

Robert Smith built the first mill in the township, as early as 1829. It was a horse mill, and did considerable business.

Lewis B. Ward entered 80 acres of land in Section 31, Township 16, Range 2 east, Nov. 9, 1827, this being the first land entered from the government in Macon county. The same day John Ward entered 80 acres in Section 33. David Foster entered 131.04 acres in Section 1 on March 17, 1831. Jeremiah Ward entered 80 acres in Section 2 May 27, 1831, and William H. Brown entered 80 acres in Section 1 on July 1, 1831.

The first church was built in 1848 at Mt. Gilead. Afterwards, in 1874, it was moved to Elwin. Rev. T. D. Weems was then the pastor. The church was organized in 1836 or 1837. It was a Methodist church.

Rev. John M. Berry was the first preacher in the township, speaking at various homes before any churches were erected. He was a Cumberland

Presbyterian minister. Bethlehem Presbyterian church was organized in 1850 by Rev. John C. Smith.

Salem Separate Baptist church was organized in 1846. A United Brethren church was organized at Elwin in 1866.

Drs. Thomas H. Read, W. T. Crissey and J. G. Speer of Decatur furnished the medical attention needed in the early days of the township.

The first supervisor from the township was I. S. Boardman. Other early supervisors were John Montgomery and Hiram Ward.

HIRAM WARD

Hiram Ward was one of the life-long residents of South Wheatland township. He was the son of William Ward, and was born Jan. 28, 1837. All his life he lived on the farm on which he was born. Being so closely identified with the early history of the county, Mr. Ward naturally was interested in the formation about 1883 and subsequent activities of the Macon County Old Settlers association. He served as its first president and held the same office in after years, being president at the time of his death in 1911. His brother, Frank N. Ward, of Blue Mound township, succeeded him as president.

One resident of South Wheatland township, John G. Imboden, became nationally, and internationally known as a cattle man. For years he engaged in buying, feeding and selling fine cattle, and his cattle won many prizes at international stock shows. Mr. Imboden was widely recognized as a judge of cattle, and was called upon on many occasions to serve in that capacity. He was for some time, president of the Illinois Livestock Breeders association and he served on national committees. Mr. Imboden's home was known as Wayside Place. He passed away in 1925.

The town of Elwin was laid out after the completion of the Illinois Central railroad. It was first called Wheatland. C. E. Connard erected an elevator there. One of his sons, George S. Connard, was identified for many years with banks in Decatur, first with the National bank and later as cashier for the Citizens National bank.

WHITMORE

IN Whitmore township was located the first house built by white men in the county, the Lorton Brothers trading post. The Lortons erected this house in 1816, and spent certain parts of the year there trading with the Indians. The cabin stood on the bank of the Sangamon, in Section 18. For about ten years trading with the Indians was carried on there, but finally operations ceased when the Indians left the county. The log house stood for many years afterwards, and was used as a voting place.

John Draper is believed to have been the first settler in the township. He came to the county about 1827, locating first in Hickory Point township. In 1828 he moved to Whitmore township. John Draper and Amy Florey were the first couple married in the township. John Anderson Draper, son of John Draper by a previous marriage, was the first child born in the township. He was born in 1828.

Other early settlers were John White, David Florey, D. H. Stuart, Jacob Spangler, and John Huston. John White was the first to enter land. On May 8, 1830, he entered 80 acres in Section 13. John Draper entered 80 acres in Section 18 on April 15, 1831. David Florey settled in Section 21. Mr. Florey came to Macon county in 1825, from Virginia, and located first in Hickory Point, moving later to Whitmore. D. H. Stuart entered 80 acres of land in Section 13 Dec. 12, 1833. John Huston, who was a native of Virginia, entered 240 acres of land Nov. 30, 1834, in Sections 8 and 9.

John Whitmore, after whom the township was named was the first bridegroom of the county, after Macon county was organized. His bride was Delilah

Miller. They secured their marriage license June 18, 1829, and were married two days later.

When the county commissioners formed a new election district in 1833, taking in the northeast section of the county, it was called Draper's district, and the old Lorton trading house was the voting place.

Two towns, which later disappeared, were laid out in early days in Whitmore township. They were Murfreesboro and Martinsburg More extended mention is made of these towns in the chapter on "Early Settlements".

William Martin, who laid out Martinsburg, erected a tile works there which he sold later to his son-in-law, Dr. H. C. Johns of Decatur.

Whitmore township was the home of what became known as the Garver settlement, though that settlement extended over into Hickory Point township.

Three Garver brothers, John, Jacob and David, and three Garver sisters and their husbands, Joseph Rife, Sr., Henry Hummell and John Epler, came from Dauphin and Lancaster counties, Pa., in the late '30s, and brought their families. Others joined them. John Good of York county, Pa., came in 1838. Later he married Nancy Garver, the daughter of Jacob Garver, and moved to Hickory Point township. Mr. Good built the first house on the David Garver land. A part of that house still stands. It was incorporated into the brick house erected in 1849. The brick house now presents a modern day appearance, having been stuccoed in 1912. Yet it has a quaint and old reminder of the past. In the front is a white marble tablet which says:

GARVER HOME
(As it is today)

"Built by David and Anna Mary Garver, 1849."

A unique feature of this home was the bake house, a one-story brick part which contained an old fashioned brick oven. The Garver home was on the main road to Monticello in the early days, and it was used as a stopping place by many travelers. At such times the big oven came into good use.

In late years this farm has been in possession of Mr. and Mrs. Ed Huston.

The Zorgers were another pioneer family. John Zorger, who came with his family in 1839, lived first in Oakley township, then came to Whitmore. His brother, Benjamin, and his half brothers and half sisters also came.

Among others who arrived later and became well known figures in the township were John Magee, Jacob Barnett, Daniel Good, G. W. Betzer, Perry Strope, John R. Bower, Samuel Gerber, James S. Shastid and Joshua Green. O. L. Stuart, who was born in Decatur in 1833, for many years was a prominent resident of Whitmore township.

The first justice of the peace in the township was Henry Rhodes. The first doctors were Dr. Walters and Dr. DeWatney The first ministers who preached in the township were Rev. A. Bradshaw and C. W. Lewis. They preached in the Orthodox school house. Whitmore's first supervisor was James Lichtenberger. Other early supervisors were Henry Rhodes, John Gill, Charles Wooster, Joshua Green, J. G. Harnsberger, J. C. Ruddock, C. H. Garver and Richard Kirby.

BRICK CHURCH

In 1841 the first school house was erected. It became known as the Orthodox school house. It was built in Section 22, and it was used for many years for all public gatherings.

The first religious services in the Garver neighborhood were held in the David Garver home, then in the Garver school house. In 1864 a church building was erected, made from brick burned in the Garver timber, the Garver men doing the work. The church was called the Brick church, but often it was referred to as the Garver church. It still stands. The building was used in early days by the United Brethren church, and at times since then by other denominations. At present the Church of God holds services there. For many years after the original church organization was gone, the building was used only for funerals.

The Friendship Baptist church was organized March 20, 1858, the first pastor being Rev. Jacob Bower. A church house was erected in 1874. The name of this church afterward was changed to the Oreana Baptist church.

The Christian church was organized at the old Zion school house in 1860 by Dr. J. W. Thayer and J. S. Clough, elders. They had previously been members of the Newburg church, which disbanded. In 1874 a building was erected at Oreana.

The Pleasant Hill United Brethren society was organized in 1850 by the Rev. James Parks and held services in the Garver school house. In 1866 a United Brethren society was organized by J. Blake, and held meetings in a Union church house.

The Pleasant Grove Church of God, organized by Rev. A. Gregory, also held services for some years in the Union church house. Rev. D. S. Weigel was pastor.

After the Decatur and Monticello railroad was built through the township, the town of Oreana was laid out on the Bower land. That was in 1873. The first house was built by Henry Morrison. First business men in the town were S. G. Coale, Frank M. Pratt, and Ruddock and Kirby. S. G. Crocker was the first postmaster.

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